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ABSTRACT

This bulletin deals with various problems, policies, and programs affecting youth in Australia. Included in the bulletin are the following articles: "Low Cost Rural Resettlement: A Youth Perspective," by Scott Williams; "And Now for Something Completely Different - or a Little More of the Same," by Margaret O'Connell; "Enrolments, Access, Participation, and Retention: Tertiary Education's Trendy Statistics," by Don Brewster, Leslie Riggs, and Carol Ey; "Co-ordination of Policy and Practices," by P.E.F. Kirby; "Income Support for Young People: An Abstract," by C. Blakers; "The Youth Labour Market: Trends and Patterns," by C. Blakers; "Some Labour Market Aspects of Youth Policy," by Richard Sweet; and "Federal Policy Relating to School Retention in Australia: A Critical Discussion," by Susan E. King. A review by Ronald Henderson of Tom O'Brien's book entitled "Job Generation. A Policy Proposal" and a review by Colin Power of D.S. Anderson and A.E. Vervoorn's book entitled "Access to Privilege: Patterns of Participation in Australian Post-Secondary Education" are also included in the bulletin. (MN)

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Vol. 3 No. 1

February 1984



The Australian National University

RESEARCH SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

Department of Sociology

ED240307

NATIONAL CLEARINGHOUSE
FOR YOUTH STUDIES

Youth Studies Bulletin

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* ABOUT THE CLEARINGHOUSE

This issue marks the first of a number of changes which are proposed for the Clearinghouse publications in 1984. As will be evident, the Clearinghouse has now become the National Clearinghouse for Youth Studies. The Newsletter has also been given a new title in response to many suggestions that it had grown beyond the scope of a newsletter. Our first thought was to call it the Bulletin of Youth Studies. This had to be ruled out because of its acronym, so it becomes the Youth Studies Bulletin.

Further changes are being made (and begin in this issue) to the format and production. A coloured cover has been chosen to distinguish all Clearinghouse publications for 1984, both Bulletin and Abstracts (though the February Abstracts were completed too early to be included in this). If the Clearinghouse continues into 1985, a new colour will indicate publications for that year.

We have been aware for some time of the inconvenience caused by having to print the Newsletter in two parts. We believe we have now managed to overcome this problem, and this Bulletin will (we hope) be undivided. We hope also in the course of the year to improve the design of the cover and the general lay-out of the Bulletin.

The contents remain much as they have been, except that Projects of Interest and From Here and There have been combined in a single section of news and oddments. In this issue, there is no article on developments overseas, Looking at Other Countries. We hope to resume this with the May issue - probably as an occasional series when opportunity offers.

We would like to thank all those who returned our 1983 end-of-year questionnaire, and particularly those who took the time to make comments and suggestions. We will do our best to take these into account in our publications this year.

We include with this issue a list of headings for return of information on research and activities. We hope that this may be a convenient and quick way for people to let us know about the research they are engaged in or have completed recently and about other programs and activities which will be of interest to readers of the Clearinghouse publications. Please send us also, where possible, copies of reports, papers and other publications which will help us in preparation of abstracts.

* * * * *

NO COMMENT

But when the excitement and distraction of war had ceased, and they were forced to survey the social elements that surrounded them, they seemed, for the first time, to have become conscious of their own incapacity. These men, indeed, were the mere children of routine. They prided themselves on being practical men. In the language of this defunct school of statesmen, a practical man is a man who practises the blunders of his predecessors.

Now commenced that Condition-of-England Question of which our generation hears so much. During five-and-twenty years every influence that can develop the energies and resources of a nation had been acting with concentrated stimulation on the British Isles. National peril and national glory; the perpetual menace of invasion, the continual triumph of conquest; the most extensive foreign commerce that was ever conducted by a single nation; an illimitable currency; an internal trade supported by swarming millions, whom manufactures and inclosure-bills summoned into existence; above all, the supreme control obtained by man over mechanic power, these are some of the causes of that rapid advance of material civilisation in England, to which the annals of the world can afford no parallel. But there was no proportionate advance in our moral civilisation. In the hurry-scurry of money-making, men-making, and machine-making, we had altogether outgrown, not the spirit, but the organisation, of our institutions.

Benjamin Disraeli. Coningsby, 1844

* GUIDANCE

. SPECIAL MEETING OF YOUTH MINISTERS

A special meeting of Youth Ministers will be held in Sydney on 22 March, 1984. The meeting will be primarily to discuss a paper prepared by the Department of Education and Youth Affairs and the Department of Social Security on Income Support for Young People.* In addition, the meeting may discuss the preliminary report of the OECD team which visited Australia in November 1983 to advise on youth policies and programs (see Clearinghouse Newsletter August 1983, p.40-41).

Copies of the discussion paper, Income Support for Young People, are being widely distributed and are available from the Office of Youth Affairs in the Department of Education and Youth Affairs. An Abstract of the paper has been made for this Bulletin (see Policy, Provisions and Participation).

- * AUSTRALIA. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND YOUTH AFFAIRS and DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SECURITY. OFFICE OF YOUTH AFFAIRS and SOCIAL WELFARE POLICY SECRETARIAT. Income Support for Young People. A discussion paper. Canberra: Office of Youth Affairs, Department of Education and Youth Affairs, January 1984 [125p.]

- . Bertrand Russell. Education and the Social Order, 1932.

In education, the ideal of competition has had two kinds of bad effects. On the one hand, it has led to the teaching of respect for competition as opposed to co-operation, especially in international affairs; and on the other hand, it has led to a vast system of competitiveness in the class-room, and in the endeavour to secure scholarships, and subsequently in the search for jobs.

.....

One of the worst defects of the belief in competition in education is that it has led, especially with the best pupils, to a great deal of over-education. At the present day there is a dangerous tendency, in every country of Western Europe, though not in North or South America, to inflict upon young people so much education as to be damaging to imagination and intellect, and even to physical health. Unfortunately, it is the cleverest of the young who suffer most from this tendency: in each generation the best brains and the best imaginations are immolated upon the altar of the Great God Competition.

REVIEW OF LABOUR MARKET PROGRAMS

A Committee of Inquiry has been established by the Federal Government to undertake a major review of the Government's labour market programs, many of which have been developed ad hoc during a period which has seen substantial changes in the labour market. There is need for careful examination of the aims, objectives and cost-effectiveness of existing programs and ways in which they can be developed into a comprehensive and integrated approach to achieving the government's labour market policies and objectives. These include: developing an appropriate framework of labour market planning in which policies and programs can be implemented; improving the quantity and quality of skills training in the trades and non-trades areas; improving the access to training opportunities of groups in the community such as women, young people and older workers and providing appropriate assistance to those at a disadvantage in the labour market, particularly the long-term unemployed, migrants, the disabled, and Aborigines.

The Committee is required to take account of these objectives and of other considerations such as likely levels of unemployment; changing labour market structures; the need for continuing restraint in public expenditure and other government initiatives including its Community Employment Program and its Review of Australian Youth Policy. Within this framework, the Committee is asked to assess the extent to which the range of training and work experience programs inherited from the previous Government meet the labour market objectives of the present Government, and make recommendations on necessary improvements.

The Government is particularly concerned to develop an integrated set of labour market programs which balances the needs of disadvantaged groups in the labour force and the skill requirements of industry and the economy.

In particular, the Review should consider: the scope for improved labour market planning; the objectives and effectiveness of current programs; the training needs of the economy; the employment, training and re-training needs of various groups of job seekers (young people, women, older workers, especially disadvantaged groups such as the long-term unemployed, the disabled and migrants); the scope for rationalisation and improved integration; the cost-effectiveness of individual programs. The Review will not cover the Commonwealth Employment Service or the two programs being separately reviewed: the Community Employment Program or the Special Employment and Training Assistance Program for Aborigines.

The Committee of Inquiry is chaired by Mr Peter Kirby, Chairman of the Technical and Further Education Board of Victoria. The other members of the Committee are Mr Harry Hauenschild, President of the Trades and Labour Council of Queensland; Mr Brian Pickett, General Manager Personnel, Email Ltd. and member of the National Training Council; Ms Kaye Schofield, Head of Women's Co-ordination Unit, NSW Department of Technical and Further Education; and Associate Professor Bill Ford, University of New South Wales.

The Committee of Inquiry will consult widely with State Governments, industry, trade unions, user groups, and other interested parties, and will receive submissions. Its Review should be completed within twelve months and an interim progress report should be provided by the end of May 1984 for consideration in the context of the 1984/85 Budget. Further information can be obtained from the Commonwealth Department of Employment and Industrial Relations, P.O. Box 399, Canberra City, 2601.

* * * * *

. COMMONWEALTH SCHOOLS COMMISSION APPOINTMENTS

The Minister for Education and Youth Affairs, Senator Susan Ryan, has announced three appointments to the Commonwealth Schools Commission. The three new members are Professor Ronald Sackville, Mr Douglas Arthur Swan, and Sister Denise Desmarchelier, each appointed as a part-time member until January 1987.

Professor Sackville is a parent actively involved in the non-government schools sector as a co-Chairman of the Australian Co-ordinating Committee of Jewish Day Schools. He is also an eminent academic. He was Dean of the Faculty of Law of the University of New South Wales before taking up his present position as Chairman of the New South Wales Law Reform Commission.

Mr Swan is the Director-General of Education in New South Wales. He has had a distinguished career in education both as a teacher and an administrator. He taught for sixteen years in government schools in New South Wales and has twenty years experience as an educational administrator.

Sister Desmarchelier is Principal of John XXIII College in Claremont, a suburb of Perth. The College is a Catholic Day School for girls and boys from Year 1 (6 years) to Year 12. Sister Desmarchelier has had extensive teaching experience in schools in Queensland and Victoria. She has also had experience of school administration in Victoria and Western Australia as well as being a member of Commonwealth and State advisory bodies.

* * * * *

. AUSTRALIAN INSTITUTE OF MULTICULTURAL AFFAIRS: CONSULTATIONS ON THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE OF REVIEW

The Council of the Australian Institute of Multicultural Affairs (AIMA) has been requested and directed by the Minister for Immigration and Ethnic Affairs 'to conduct consultations with interested ethnic and other groups and individuals relating to the recommendations of the Committee of Review of AIMA and to report to me on the views gathered in these consultations, by 16 April 1984'.

Copies of four sections of Volume 1 of the Committee's Report are available from Dr Kenneth Rivett, Acting Chairman (at the address below). These are Chapter 1, Summary of Main Recommendations, Chapter VIII, Issues and Prospects for Multiculturalism, and Chapter IX, Restructuring AIMA - An Alternative Model, section 2 and Appendix B. The full Report is available through AGPS.

The Council will receive both written and oral submissions. Further information may be obtained from:

Dr Kenneth Rivett, Acting Chairman
Australian Institute of Multicultural Affairs
G.P.O. Box 2470V
Melbourne, Victoria 3001

* * * * *

. SOUTH AUSTRALIAN CENTRE FOR YOUTH STUDIES

A Centre for Youth Studies has been established at the Magill Campus of the South Australian College of Advanced Education. The Centre will be independent of the College structure and be managed initially by a board of six with the co-ordinator being responsible for the daily activities of the Centre.

The main functions of the Centre for Youth Studies will be:

- . to promote, undertake and disseminate research into youth questions and to engage in debate in this area
- . to develop a resource centre of material on youth issues for community and professional use
- . to offer advocacy to Government, institutions and individuals on youth policies and respond effectively to youth questions.

It is hoped that the Centre for Youth Studies will provide a forum for people working in South Australia on issues relating to young people, as well as providing an information service on request.

Such a Centre cannot be successful without the support of all those involved in youth affairs, both in South Australia and nationally. Consequently, the Centre asks all those so involved to keep the Centre informed of all relevant matters, events, publications and research projects. If you can help, please send information to the co-ordinator.

All enquiries should be directed to:

Mike Presdee (Co-ordinator)
South Australian C.A.E. (Magill Campus)
Lorne Avenue
Magill, S.A. 5070 Tel.: [08] 332 4711

* * * * *

. NEW DEFINITION OF THE METRE

A new definition of the metre has been released by the Minister for Science and Technology, The Hon. Barry O. Jones:

The metre is the length of the path travelled by light in vacuum during a time interval of $1/299\,792\,458$ of a second.

* * * * *

POVERTY LINES: AUSTRALIA, AUGUST 1983

The Institute of Applied Economic and Social Research, University of Melbourne has updated poverty lines in Australia to August 1983 (the mid-month of the September quarter).

The poverty lines have been calculated using the methods and assumptions of the Commission of Inquiry into Poverty, with one important change. Whereas in its first main report, *Poverty in Australia* (April 1975) the Commission pointed out that these poverty lines needed to be updated regularly by movements in seasonally adjusted average weekly earnings, the Institute has taken advantage of the introduction of seasonally adjusted estimates of household disposable income and now updates the poverty lines by movements in seasonally adjusted household disposable income per head. This revised method of updating is technically consistent with the definition of the poverty line.

There are two sets of figures. The first relates income to all costs including housing, and the second relates income less actual housing costs to all other costs of living. Depending on actual housing costs, family income units may be above one poverty line but below the other. All the figures refer to income after tax.

Based on the preliminary seasonally adjusted estimate of household disposable income for the September quarter 1983 of \$2334.6 million (weekly) and a resident population estimate of 15,412,400; average household disposable income per head per week for the quarter was \$151.50. Accordingly the poverty line for a couple family income unit with the head of the family in the workforce and two dependent children, is \$204.90 including housing costs, and \$158.60 for all costs other than housing. The poverty line for a single person in the workforce is \$109.10 per week including housing and \$73.40 for all costs other than housing.

More detailed information may be obtained from:

Ian Manning
[03] 341-5098

Kiera O'Neill
[03] 341-6544

Tim Ward
[03] 341-5288

Institute of Applied Economic and Social Research
University of Melbourne
Parkville, Victoria 3052

* * * * *

CONFERENCES

54th ANZAAS Congress: Canberra, 14-18 May 1984

Among the sessions of this Congress are discussions of various aspects of Aboriginal education; information processing and education; longitudinal research and education; participation in education.

Further information may be obtained from:

54th ANZAAS Congress Secretariat
Dulcie Stretton Associates
70 Glenmore Road
Paddington, N.S.W. 2021

Australian College of Education Silver Jubilee Conference: Canberra 5-9 May 1984

The conference has been organised around four sub-themes, one on each of four days:

- . The Brave New World of 1984
- . The communications revolution
- . Being human in a technological age
- . Implications of the technological society for education.

Contributed papers will deal with these sub-themes in a number of areas including:

- | | |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------|
| . TAFE | . medical education |
| . adult education | . recurrent education |
| . distance education | . careers |
| . early childhood education | . future perspectives |
| . humanistic education | |

The Buntine Oration will be delivered at the Australian Academy of Science on Monday evening, 7 May. The 1984 Buntine Orator is The Hon. Mr Justice Michael Kirby, C.M.G., Chairman of the Australian Law Reform Commission, who will link his address to the Conference theme.

Registrations close on 6 April, 1984.

Further information from:

A.C.E. Silver Jubilee Conference Convener
P.O. Box 166
Kambah, A.C.T. 2902 Tel.: [062] 31 0733

Conference on Youth and Responsibility: La Trobe University, August
16-19, 1984

Papers for this Conference are invited in the following areas:

- . Preparing for work roles - where? how? what?
- . Unemployment and youth
- . Does modern society separate youth and adult worlds overmuch?
- . Participation of youth in formal organisations. Why? Why not?
- . Young people, the vote and political responsibility
- . Leisure activities of the young: distraction, escape, indoctrination or preparation?
- . What does sporting involvement do to the 14-24 age group?
- . Leadership roles for young people
- . Changing patterns for secondary education - experimentation and evaluation
- . Analysis of work experience programs
- . Disadvantaged youth and responsibility
- . Independence and maturity in the context of family
- . Youth as a commercial market - a delay to responsibility?

Further information may be obtained from:

Dr D. Hickman
Department of Sociology
La Trobe University
Bundoora, Victoria 3083 Tel.: [03] 479 2759

Higher Education Research and Development Society of Australia (HERDSA):
Sydney, 14-15 May 1984

Information about this Conference and the Educational Developers' Forum which follows it may be obtained from:

Tertiary Education Research Centre
University of New South Wales
P.O. Box 1
Kensington, N.S.W. 2033

* * * * *

**Australian Association for Research in Education Annual Conference:
Perth, 21-25 November 1984**

The theme of this Conference is Research and Educational Futures: Technological Development and Educational Change. Contributions are invited for presentation at the Conference on the theme but also on other research topics. The program will include small roundtables, poster sessions, paper sessions and symposia.

Further information may be obtained from:

Mr John C. Hedberg
AARE Conference Secretary
Faculty of Education
W.A. Institute of Technology
Kent Street
South Bentley, W.A. 6102

SCHOOL TO WORK? From the *Times Educational Supplement*, 9 December 1983

Gap shows lost leavers

There is a "disturbing gap" in the school-leaver statistics which has not yet been accounted for, Mr Jack Mansell, director of the Government's Further Education Unit, told a conference last week.

He asked where were the leavers going who were neither turning up as expected in the Youth Training Scheme nor staying on in education.

Mr Mansell, who said it was now clear that the YTS had been "over-marketed" suggested that the claims that there was some increase in employment among leavers still left a gap in the figures.

His question came on the heels of the monthly Department of Employment figures which showed a drop in school-leaver unemployment of nearly 30,000 in a month, bringing the total for Great Britain down to 133,100.

At this time last year there were 141,700 on the register.

The 133,100 include a good many of last year's leavers who have still not found a job - and many of whom because they have been in the Youth Opportunities Programme are not eligible for YTS. So unemployment and the 250,000 filled places in the Youth Training Scheme probably account for only around 315,000 of the

Edited by Mark Jackson

16-year-olds who were expected to leave full-time education this summer.

In theory, there should only be jobs for around 60,000 of them, because the YTS is thought to have absorbed the rest of the jobs for leavers that would otherwise - according to Manpower Services Commission forecasters - have been available for leavers this year.

The possibility that more youngsters than expected have stayed on in education appears to be ruled out by preliminary returns to the DES from schools and colleges - which show a slight fall this year in the staying-on rates.

The easy explanation is that the total demand from employers for youngsters has risen unexpectedly, and that even after allowing for the jobs absorbed into the YTS, enough vacancies have turned up to provide work for all the 150,000 who are not accounted for by the YTS or the unemployment register.

Some support is lent to this explanation by the large increase in the number of vacancies notified to career offices - 7,800 this month by comparison with 2,500 in November of last year.

Ministers have been quick to suggest that more youngsters are going into jobs, and Mr David Young, chairman of the Manpower Services Commission, says that the "blame" for the shortfall in YTS trainees must be laid at the door of the Chancellor of the Exchequer for securing an improvement in the national economy.

But Mr Young cited as the main evidence for his belief that more youngsters were going into jobs the same careers service survey, carried out before the DES figures for staying on rates became available, which suggested a big increase in the numbers staying on.

Where this year's 16-year-olds are or may be		
Total 16-year-olds, Britain		846,000
Staying on in full-time education (early returns estimate)	366,000	
In the YTS (end of October)	215,000	
Registered as unemployed, say	100,000	
In jobs expected to remain outside YTS	60,000	
Total accounted for	711,000	-711,000
Whereabouts unknown		135,000

Possible explanations

@More in jobs because of improvement in youth labour market?

@More not registering - for under-18s this means losing supplementary benefit entitlement

* ASPECTS

. LOW COST RURAL RESETTLEMENT: A YOUTH PERSPECTIVE

by Scott Williams*

Recently, comments of the Prime Minister and other members of the Federal Government have focused attention on low cost rural resettlement schemes. The Australian Rural Adjustment Unit (ARAU) has been working in this field for some time and its experience has prompted a certain reserve about the role of 'Kibbutz' systems in Australia. Fortunately, the Federal Government has adopted an approach that will foster informed debate about the nature and scale of Federally sponsored low cost rural resettlement (LCRR) before any, perhaps precipitate, action.

The current wave of LCRR is generally associated with 'alternative lifestyle' movements but this is now an outdated concept. LCRR ranges in settlement pattern from single households per block of land through several households per block and up to the large communities and communes which may have 30 or more households per block. It also ranges in age and lifestyle with increasing numbers of retired and 'straight' people choosing to build a low cost dwelling and to adopt a lower cost of living. Few youth are directly involved in LCRR although many are involved via their parents' resettling. The present wave of resettlers is largely those who have reasonable amounts of capital to purchase land or shares in land. Such sums of capital are often not available to young people.

Given this brief background, more attention will now be focused on the particular issues in LCRR that may concern youth or increased youth participation.

The Past: This is at least the fourth wave of rural resettlement. Earlier waves occurred with the two soldier settlement schemes and with closer settlement in (e.g.) Victoria. Other socialist experiments were attempted by Australians in, for example, Paraguay. None of these had a large youth component as a primary focus.

There have been several programs to resettle children in rural accommodation - primarily orphans or disadvantaged. An example was a Catholic program in the Canberra region. There were also at least two schemes to bring children from the United Kingdom pre- and post-World War II. These were the Barnado Farm Home and the 'Dreadnought Children' schemes.

Certainly the earlier rural resettlement schemes for adults were often unsuccessful - owing principally to inadequate forethought about the economic lot size of land to award each resettler. On this experience, it would be very wise to investigate earlier youth oriented schemes before designing the policy for a new LCRR scheme that has a focus towards youth.

* Project Officer, Australian Rural Adjustment Unit, University of New England, Armidale, NSW, 2351

The Present: There are various schemes for youth resettlement overseas and at least one proposed in New South Wales. There has been a Canadian scheme for some time for youth with social problems and it boasts of having only a 10 per cent recidivist rate. A scheme for homeless children has been proposed for Gosford, north of Sydney. No doubt, research would turn up a number of programs in other parts of Australia and in the world as a whole. Such research may contribute to any policy to be developed.

The Future: It is clear that the political climate is becoming ripe for some form of constructive experiment in rural resettlement of youth. The various 'kite-flying' proposals by politicians to date have generally met with an unfavourable reception. Critics have pointed out the gross oversimplification of simply moving 'kids to the bush'. Such criticisms are so obvious that it must be expected the policy-makers are already aware of them. Indeed, recent activities by the Federal Departments most concerned indicate they have every intention of moving carefully to construct a viable policy. The Australian Rural Adjustment Unit is involved in the efforts to arrive at such a policy and to this end has convened a meeting of selected persons from throughout Australia to develop a policy discussion paper on low cost rural resettlement. Copies of this paper are available from the Unit at the University of New England.¹

The Issues: There are many hundreds of issues to be addressed when developing a policy in this area. For simplicity, they can be loosely categorised under the following headings:

- . shelter (the means of housing participants)
- . economics (financial self-sufficiency: a goal?)
- . political (effects of government sponsorship - equity issues?)
- . social (social framework for these activities)
- . legal (who will own the venture?)
- . administration (who or what will administer projects?).

It would obviously be possible to write at very great length about the issues that fall under these various subject headings. Some effort has been made to do this in the ARAU policy discussion paper mentioned above. However, it would probably be generally accepted that there is unlikely to be only one approach to youth resettlement. There needs to be a range of resettlement alternatives to permit young people to find the alternative that suits them. This will permit different social structures, administrative systems and economic goals.

The Goals: The Federal Government has not clearly expressed its goals for a youth-oriented program. This makes any policy generation difficult. However, providing the government is prepared to be lead, it may allow young people to determine for themselves what the goals of a resettlement policy should be. The specific target group may also evolve in this fashion. There are a number of traditional, static, youth oriented communities in rural Australia. Instances include orphanages, remand homes and youth shelters. The LCRR approach by comparison is dynamic, stimulating and potentially much more constructive than the traditional models.

The Approach: There are some interesting philosophical positions that might be taken on the issues that come under the above headings. One approach is that comparatively little planning should be undertaken and the projects essentially thrown in at the deep end. There may be a substantial proportion of failures under this approach but those that survive will have a tough backbone. This stance possibly fosters the type of adversity under which the Israeli kibbutz program flourished.

Alternatively, there may be thorough planning and guidelines set. The projects may get off to a smooth start and later bog down in administrative detail or peter out for lack of a common ideal. This has happened with LCRR schemes in New Zealand. The planning may not adequately involve the participants and this will also contribute to the decline as it has in some Aboriginal projects.

These and other scenarios are possible and decision makers have to wander carefully through the thicket of possibilities. It could well be argued that the best way to wander is to convene a consultative group with no vested interest in resettlement and no bureaucratic constraints to the design of appropriate policy and given them an open brief. This group should include wide representation from the proposed target group so that it does in fact produce a policy that suits the target group.

The Degree: By way of conclusion, it should be made clear that any action by government to assist low cost rural resettlement for youth can be passive or active. There are a large number of 'housekeeping' tasks that governments can undertake, for example, in removing inconsistencies in State and Federal regulations. This is a passive approach that costs nothing and should raise little criticism but nevertheless will help at least a few of the more pioneering among youth who will 'go it alone'.

Conversely governments may take a 'sponsorship' role and intervene in the resettlement process with finance and other assistance. Such intervention is likely to be more susceptible to criticism (which has already been foreshadowed in responses to recent press releases) but many more youth will have the opportunity.

FOOTNOTES

1. N.S.W. UNIVERSITY OF NEW ENGLAND. AUSTRALIAN RURAL ADJUSTMENT UNIT (ARAU)

Low Cost Rural Resettlement. Armidale, NSW: ARAU, University of New England, 1984 [\$6.00]

AND NOW FOR SOMETHING COMPLETELY DIFFERENT - OR A LITTLE MORE OF THE SAME

by Margaret O'Connell.*

This article is concerned with the search for a useful connection between the Rural Resettlement Movement and the development of satisfactory post-school roles for young people in work or in other activities. This raises a number of questions: What is the Rural Resettlement Movement? What are satisfactory post-school roles in work and other activities? If there is to be a connection between the two, how can this best be achieved?

The Rural Resettlement Movement

The Rural Resettlement Movement is a clearly definable development policy for rural Australia. An evolution of the Alternative Society, it is being increasingly viewed by those aware of prevailing social and economic trends as a viable and desirable lifestyle. While numerous regional and personal variations of the lifestyle exist, certain desirable aspects are shared. As a result of the emphasis on low consumption and joint land ownership, large numbers of people are able to be settled without the usual expense of capital works. The emphasis on self-sufficiency and low accommodation costs minimises the financial needs of its adherents.¹ Of particular benefit is the use of land considered marginal under traditional land use systems, thus opening up previously unusable or under-used rural areas. The lifestyle appears capable of physically and emotionally sustaining members outside the traditional workforce: it facilitates the redistribution of the welfare dollar back to hard-hit rural areas; its value system has encouraged important new initiatives in agriculture, health, education and group interaction to name a few. It has also fostered the development of new marketable skills tradeable both within the Movement and to the local region. This has been achieved without any assistance from the government except 'the dole' and often in the face of powerful opposition by people threatened by the image of licentiousness that so obsesses the media. It is apparent that the Movement, which is already so successfully accommodating thousands of unemployed people in such a socially beneficial way must have important contributions to make in meeting the needs of unemployed youth.

Satisfactory Post-School Roles and Other Activities

For the purpose of this discussion, satisfactory activities for unemployed youth are considered as those which meet their present physical and psychological needs and provide a basis for their continued development. On this definition, the Rural Resettlement Movement is already meeting

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these needs for large numbers of unemployed people.

In considering ways in which policy-makers can tap into and encourage this initiative it is important to separate means and ends. While what has been achieved is relevant, the Rural Resettlement Movement has found a new set of values and beliefs that many see as a much more humane and intelligent way to manage both their personal affairs and the land they see as being under their care. The question then is whether the interest of the government is in a new method of job creation and youth support, or in an alternative life-style as a viable option for the unemployed.

The first approach attempts to isolate specific aspects of the Movement that have an intrinsic value, and to design ways to offer these within the current youth and unemployment context. For the purpose of this discussion this method of approach is called the 'Product Focus' since it concentrates on the end product of the lifestyle: the ways in which the values and beliefs are expressed.

The second approach, that of viewing the Movement as a viable option to unemployment, is more difficult to deal with, since the lifestyle is an expression of and is supported by the belief system. To promote the lifestyle would be to promote these beliefs and values. I have called this the 'Process Focus'.

Product Focus

This method is primarily directed towards skills acquisition. It would include programs that encourage the passing on of specific knowledge relevant to subsistence living, the provision of cheap land, and the establishment of special education centres to teach people how to live in Rural Resettlement communities.

Emphasis would be on courses such as permaculture (an integrated system of habitat design introduced by Tasmanian Bill Mollison, which is now influencing agricultural methods throughout the world); organic gardening; environmental studies; low energy technology; recycling; self-development; consensus decision-making and similar skills that are useful within the mainstream society. This is already being done in a small way in TAFE colleges and CYSS centres in areas where the Movement is well established. Their success suggests that this approach is useful in assisting unemployed people to cope with the negative impact of unemployment and to learn new marketable skills. However, without the infrastructure supplied by the value system, this benefit appears to be limited. Where people are already interested in living the lifestyle, this approach does provide them with the necessary skills and resources, but for most unemployed youth it simply broadens the range of courses to do while waiting for a job.

Another approach of the product focus is to use the Movement as a model. People living satisfying lives based on minimum consumption and voluntary simplicity are useful examples to those living in enforced poverty. In this context, the rural resettlement movement becomes useful to rural unemployed in the same way as artists and musicians of Darlinghurst might be for city youth. The value of this model is not in the lifestyle itself but in that it is a working option to traditional employment. Such models are crucial. Young unemployed people spend most of their lives being educated to take their places in a society that has no place for them. Alternatives have not been considered. Lacking models, they invent their own. These, however,

can often be anti-social, short-lived, or personally destructive. Gangs and drug cultures are two examples.

Adherents of the Movement are practising examples of the fact that it is possible to create a lifestyle that is capable of sustaining the individual indefinitely without traditional employment both economically and in terms of personal growth and social recognition. These are fundamental needs often denied to unemployed youth. While they may reject the lifestyle as their personal option, they are made aware through their contact that there are still options available.

Any situation that allows for creative interaction between the two groups will develop this awareness. Its major difference from the first approach is that the interaction must offer the unemployed youth something other than the tools of the lifestyle to encourage their participation. Community workshops in which people who have skills are given access to tools and equipment in return for tutoring young unemployed people are an example of this approach. Resettlers get access to much needed resources and unemployed people gain skills relevant to their area, access to the model and the psychological supports of the workplace to which they have been denied.

Another way the Movement could be used as a model is to create new government sponsored communities based on the Movement's experiences, such as the village model now proposed by the Homeless Children's Association. While such proposals have considerable merit, their infrastructure suggests that they have more in common with communities such as 'Boy's Town' than with the Rural Resettlement Movement.

Process Focus

In viewing the Movement itself as a viable alternative to unemployment, a different approach is necessary. Since so many people have made a successful transition from the traditional workforce to a sustainable option well suited to the needs of the unemployed and have done so without assistance, the values that motivate and sustain them offer implications for welfare services beyond the limitations of the lifestyle itself.

To take full advantage of this, policy-makers must recognise the limitations of current services, particularly in the areas of training, support and self-help. One of the major concerns of the welfare section is how to motivate people to take advantage of the services being offered. Where the welfare approach has failed, the Movement appears to have succeeded. Both the method and the goals must be in keeping with the values of the Movement. To fail to take this approach distorts the potential with the possibility of only token change for the unemployed and, by misdirecting funds, poses a threat to the viability of the Movement itself.

The difficulty with this is that very little research into this belief system has been done and it is hard to isolate which specific values would give the desired results. However in relation to youth unemployment, two concepts, those of work and power, have obvious application.

Work

One of the most notable differences between those who cope well with unemployment and those who do not is the degree of adherence to the

Protestant work ethic. In the transition from unemployment to any sustainable alternative to traditional employment, the first step is the rejection of this work ethic. Until people make this rejection, all the skills and insights previously mentioned will be simply yet more 'things to do until a job comes along and you can get back to the business of living again'.

In a society that values people according to the work they do, the money it brings and the goods it commands, people without jobs must be seen as valueless. If they are to have the courage and commitment to explore the options, they must reject this imposed view of self. A central aspect of the Movement has been the rejection of this work ethic both for the impoverishment of people's lives as they 'live to work', and for the conspicuous consumption and waste of resources it supports.

Within the Movement, work is seen as that which is required to maintain the individuals, their dependants and their community. Within this definition, work in the garden, work on personal relationships and paid employment all have equally important roles to play. Fractional work patterns then become the most natural and desirable forms of paid employment.

As long as the current concept of work is perpetuated in schools, the media and the workforce, such a transition cannot be made without considerable psychological trauma for the unemployed. Innovative ways to assist the long term unemployed to make this transition have been developed and models play an important part. However no alternative to traditional employment can be considered a legitimate option without the integration into mainstream belief systems of a concept of work that supports it.

Concern is often expressed that without the Protestant work ethic, few people would want to work. However even within the Movement, full-time work is still considered appropriate at times and in certain circumstances and adequate remuneration is expected. In the light of the current workforce structure and the focus on alternative options, it may now be timely to address this problem not only in a public awareness campaign, but within institutions and in welfare services. Certainly any attempts to offer the skills and knowledge acquired by the Movement to unemployed youth should incorporate the Movement's concept of work.

Power

Another notable feature of the Movement is its rejection of the power structures of mainstream society: the government, the police, the schools, the church and the family all come under question. Even within the communities power is minimal. This rejection of authority - accepting very little of its protection, its benefits, or its oppression - is the basis of the self-sufficiency the Movement and its members strive for. The less power given to such structures, the greater the power people have over their own lives. It is this independence that provides individuals with the freedom to design their own lifestyle. It is both the motivation and the reward.

Workers in community based programs are often concerned about the lack of empowerment they are able to achieve with their clients. If this approach to power has relevance then it would appear that the problem lies in the centralised power structure of the services rather than in the individual.

The high degree of involvement and initiative shown by young unemployed

people during the campaign to refund CYSS centres in 1981 is an example of the potential of the individuals where the situation allows. With the demise of the CYSS structure, (paid staff, guidelines, etc.) people were free to design their own input. The withdrawal of the government allowed them to claim CYSS as their own and they defended it, not as the program it was designed to be, but as a space that belonged to them. It became a framework which they could design and in which they could choose their own roles. Their involvement continued through the period of consultation that followed but when the new guidelines failed to recognise their input and the implications of the experience, they were forced back into the position of being receivers of a service and their involvement suffered accordingly.

This is not just a function of defensive action. A similar thing happened with the Nimbin Festival where the designers created a context around the concept of a sustainable lifestyle celebration to which people could contribute. Over forty homeless young people, many of whom had been rejected by welfare services as being beyond help, worked daily for over two months, without pay, to make their festival a success.

To facilitate this high degree of self-determination, a very fluid structure is needed. As a result the social infrastructure of communities often appears anarchistic; decision-making can be laboriously slow and a high degree of tolerance is often necessary. But if the government is willing to support the movement for the benefit of other unemployed people this power structure must be incorporated into its initiatives. A possible approach would be to define the context (i.e. a purpose for interaction such as shared land, information centre, etc.) and to facilitate consensus decision-making and a non-hierarchical organisational structure. The Non-Violent Action techniques have much to offer in this area. Failure to take this approach could result in a lack of grass roots support and the loss of a major self-help aspect of the Movement.

Conclusions

The Rural Resettlement Movement represents the accumulated knowledge of a large number of people who have moved to the country and whose common experiences have considerable value for unskilled young people in rural areas. If the transfer of these experiences takes place within the value system of the Movement rather than that of the welfare system, particularly in relation to the concepts of work and power, then there is the possibility of the development of a whole new approach to services to unemployed youth in particular and welfare in general.

FOOTNOTES

1. Adherents to the Movement attempt to provide as much of their own food, clothing, shelter and entertainment as possible. Status is often connected to a person's ability to achieve this.
2. Minimum consumption and voluntary simplicity are the end results of the rejection of low quality, wasteful consumerism. They focus on meeting real needs rather than artificial media-stimulated wants. Voluntary simplicity is to purchase high quality, durable articles and to maintain them - the antithesis of planned obsolescence and the throw-away culture.

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* **BOOK REVIEWS**

- . O'BRIEN, Tom. *Job Generation. A Policy Proposal*. Melbourne, Victoria: Hill of Content, 1981 [209p.: \$14.95] (see Abstract 83/C: 1)

by Ronald Henderson*

The core of this book is the proposal of a government sponsored community development program to give necessary support to local entrepreneurs.

The knowledge of the expert technicians in government departments with manpower-related services will be matched by the cumulative wisdom of local business people in joint ventures to create jobs.

They will work together for the common good - the creation of more and better jobs.

The author is a philosophical sociologist who has studied many reports in Canberra. It is very difficult for this reviewer, an economist whose first book was on the finance of small business, to avoid harsh criticism that may be unfair.

An economist reading a book suggesting remedies for unemployment expects to find some suggestions as to why we now have such unemployment, whereas we had virtually full employment throughout the 1950s and 1960s. O'Brien gives no diagnosis, which does not inspire confidence in the remedies proposed. If there were an index to this book, I doubt if it would contain the word 'inflation'. For most economists, whatever their views on policy, the significance of the connection between inflation and unemployment is undoubted. One of the leading analysts in Australia, Dr R.G. Gregory, in his lecture to the Academy of Social Sciences in 1982 summed it up in these words:

In many respects the process whereby expectations as to future wage and price increases are generated is at the heart of the stagflation problem.

We want an expansion of demand for goods and services that will generate more output and more jobs without higher wages and higher prices. He often suggests that his proposals will 'organise labour demand' (p.119). For an economist this is difficult because the demand for labour is a derived demand, derived from the expansion of demand for goods and services in the private sector, or from an expansion of expenditure in the public sector. Those of us who wish to see such an expansion believe it will increase the demand for labour in both public and private sectors through multiplier effects, but this does not appear to be what O'Brien is considering at all.

He is concerned to provide what he describes as 'capital' for the growth of small business:

- * Professor Henderson was Director of the Institute of Applied Economic and Social Research at the University of Melbourne and is now closely associated with the Victorian Council for Social Research and the publication of Australian Society.

To give the Community Enterprise Foundations both the confidence to plan ahead and also the potential to create jobs they will need to know from the beginning that they will have access to adequate venture capital for viable economic projects. For this purpose it is advocated that the Department of Employment and Youth Affairs operate an appropriate loan fund itself or underwrite the necessary lending by the Commonwealth Development Bank (p.94).

It would seem that this 'capital' will be mainly in the form of low interest loans in other words enabling the small business to incur more debt. It is perfectly true, as he says, that Australian banks are unhelpful; they lend on assets - not on good realistic estimates of future earning capacity as banks do in the United States. There are many small competing banks in the United States, local banks, who do this to survive. Some of them go bankrupt every year, but small business gets some loans. That, however, is not really the nub of the problem of small business. That problem is the shortage of equity capital, the high debt to equity ratio. It is not an easy problem to overcome because ownership of equity means participation in control and control is precisely what the small businessman intends to keep to himself. It is possible for a respected financial institution such as the Industrial and Commercial Finance Corporation in Britain to provide some equity capital for small to medium business and exercise a limited degree of control by placing a director on the board without imposing the threat that the business will be taken over. As O'Brien explains, it is a great pity that the Commonwealth Development Bank has not done more of this.

This however discloses another problem, that of management, especially financial management. That, access to loan capital is crucial to the success of many small businesses. That is why ICFC puts a director on the board.

O'Brien is aware that giant corporations are not adding to their labour force. It is too simplistic, however, to jump from there to small local business. There are a great many medium sized businesses which, as was shown many years ago, are the most profitable sector which is increasing both output and employment.

His recipe for assistance to small business through the Community Enterprise Foundations is clearly an echo of his experience in the Australian Assistance Plan. It was fine to bring business men, local politicians and those concerned with community development together to undertake community projects. It is really quite different to suggest that a group of local shopkeepers and others should meet to provide concessional loans for one of their competitors to expand his operations. For the author explains the CEF will most likely be composed of 'small business people' (p.122). He suggests that they will receive valuable help from 'expert technicians in government departments' - professions. Will they really provide much expertise in running a small business? There is extensive literature on this subject, not mentioned by O'Brien, which does not support this conclusion:

The whole reason for the existence of the Community Enterprise Foundations is to organise labour demand -

generate work for others ... this entails stimulating entrepreneurs to exploit the business opportunities open to them' (p.119).

Is there any reason to believe that entrepreneurs need stimulation, or that a community committee will provide it? Surely by definition an entrepreneur is an active innovative person and a camel is a horse drawn up by a committee.

O'Brien suggests that his Community Enterprise Foundations have some resemblance to State Decentralisation Programs of State Governments. That is really depressing, for in Victoria at least such programs have been most disappointing. I suggest the hard facts are that there is really very little chance of creating commercially viable business in remote country towns such as Bairnsdale or Bourke. To base a job creation program on the assumption that the jobs must be created where the people are now, to refuse to accept the drift to the larger towns and the metropolitan areas, is to ensure failure. Some non-metropolitan areas are thriving such as Coffs Harbour where tourists and retired people create a demand for goods and services. Again there has to be a source of demand for employment to grow.

To try to be fair, there are some things governments can do to ease the growth of business, to reduce impediments. They have been slow in Australia to copy the successful experimental industrial estates established in the depressed areas of South Wales, Tyneside and Clydeside in the 1930s. By the provision of 'nest factories' to rent at £1 a week and space for moving on to larger ones, many small firms were assisted to grow. Further individual assistance in financial management was often given by the estate accountant. These industrial estates actually broke even and have been widely copied throughout Britain. A small firm is enabled to conserve its precious scarce equity capital and control, if it can rent instead of buying a factory.

As O'Brien says, there are unsatisfied needs in the community and 'for so long as such needs remain, then there is work to be done to satisfy them'. Unfortunately he does not proceed to analyse those needs which must be met by governments and financed by taxation and distinguish them from those which can be met by the expansion of private enterprise. This crucial distinction is also being blurred today with unfortunate results in the Community Employment Program. One view is that we need a much fairer and more efficient taxation system to provide funds for the many services governments should be providing and funding to meet human needs. This will make a big contribution to the problem of unemployment. One example is education. If we were to modify our education system so that the proportion of 17 year olds receiving some further education or training were raised from 60 per cent to 80 per cent, as in other rich countries, this would involve a big reduction in current unemployment and, more importantly, provide that extra 20 per cent with a much better chance of permanent career employment in the world from 1990 onwards in which there will be little demand for uneducated unskilled or process workers.

There is an implicit assumption in this book - as in many other contributions to the subject - that the only way to reduce unemployment is to create more jobs. Authors fail to notice the growth in the proportion of the population gainfully occupied by the flood of married women into the labour force. To achieve the right to work it is possible, as several

European countries have shown, to encourage the voluntary adoption of regular part-time work at all ages - job-sharing, early half-retirement, part work and re-training and so on to create many more job opportunities.

We shall not find a single solution to our unemployment problem. We must pursue a whole range of policies. Let us encourage business - large and small, but not by setting up community committees to lend money.

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- . ANDERSON, D.S. and A.E. VERVOORN. Access to Privilege: Patterns of Participation in Australian Post-Secondary Education. Canberra: Australian National University Press, 1983 [197p.: \$15.00] (See Abstract 83/AB: 130)

by Colin Power*

MAINTAINING THE DIFFERENCE

During the 1960s and early 1970s, participation in, and equity of access to, higher education were of considerable concern to the upwardly mobile, to researchers and ultimately to government in Australia. That concern faltered with the onset of the recession and the responses to it of the Fraser government. Access to higher education and participation have now been restored as an espoused policy objective of government. As the recession continues to close off opportunities in the workforce for young people, governments have begun to note the concerns expressed by educators about the low participation rates in upper secondary and tertiary education in Australia and to recognise that there may be social and political (as well as economic - and even educational) advantages in retaining more young people in the education system. Given the renewed concern for equity of access and retention, Anderson and Vervoorn's analysis of patterns of participation in post-secondary education could not have come at a more opportune time: it is a book which should be of considerable interest not only to researchers in the field, but also to governments and their advisors.

The authors need no introduction: Don Anderson has been worrying away at the key questions addressed in the book for the past 20 years. More importantly, the book lives up to the promise of its title and the reputation of its authors. It provides the most systematic and authoritative

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account available of the ways in which the post-secondary student population in Australia is unrepresentative of the population as a whole. By drawing together a wealth of evidence from government statistics and from studies of the family background of higher education students since the 1940s, the book presents a detailed map of who gains access to higher education and who does not. The second major concern of the work is the degree to which patterns of participation among various social groups have changed over time. Finally, attempts are made throughout to examine the impact of government policies, economic and social circumstances on participation patterns.

In a few bold strokes, the introductory section outlines the structure of tertiary education in Australia, poses the questions to be addressed, provides a model to tackle these and answers to them. In a nutshell, the book clearly demonstrates the persistence of a social reproduction mechanism in Australia in which higher education serves as a pathway to the privileges which professionals (like you and me, gentle reader) enjoy. True, the authors acknowledge, those who gain access to the most prestigious institutions and faculties are those who perform well in matriculation examinations. There are now many more female, working class, minority groups and mature age students - but in almost all cases, they are still under-represented in higher education in relation to their numbers, and they remain under-represented - despite the social, demographic, economic and political changes of the post-war period. The hope that inequalities in participation in higher education due to personal background and circumstances would be eliminated remains as illusive as ever.

Having skated over the problems of defining equality of opportunity, the authors opt for a mainstream sociological interpretation of the problems addressed. This, in turn, leads them to a comparison of the degree to which various groups in society have participated in higher education, especially in those areas which provide access to occupations high in the social prestige stakes.

One key variable in the Anderson model is availability of places. The pattern of growth is similar to that described by Edwards¹ and Fulton:² a regular expansion in response to student demand up until the mid-1950s, a new exponential rate up until the mid-1970s, and a slower rate since then. In recent years, student pressure to gain access to preferred courses of study in Australian universities has increased substantially; in these areas the number of quotas imposed has grown. Access to privilege is restricted, while at the same time the demand from qualified applicants for places in less preferred areas (e.g. those where there is an oversupply of graduates) and institutions has slackened as the value of them and opportunities available have dropped.

The one bright spot in the book relates to women - participation by women in higher education has increased considerably and is approaching parity. Yet there is still convincing evidence of prejudice and the authors warn of a possible return to earlier social patterns with the downturn in employment opportunities. In other areas, the old story is repeated: the privileged send their children to private or academically oriented state schools, expect and encourage them to perform well and ensure that the support necessary for them to do so is forthcoming. Their children ultimately do better in matriculation examinations and dominate the most sought after sectors of higher education. It is largely during schooling

that students' paths through higher education are mapped out, opened or closed. The questions of how and why this is the case, however, remain open.

Analyses of other factors similarly lead to a catalogue of insights and challenges. Thus we are told that it is highly unlikely that participation by country students will be improved purely by educational measures, and that perhaps country areas will be revitalised only by radical alterations of social arrangements and living patterns. While the effect of migrant background on participation has received little attention, the studies reviewed do reveal that aspirations vary markedly between national groups and that actual extent of participation does not necessarily correspond with level of aspiration. The analysis leads to some telling questions. So we need to make allowance for variations in the values, aspirations and needs of various groups in society - before judging whether or not a certain level and form of participation in higher education constitutes an educational disadvantage.

Access to Privilege is a sobering account of the persistence of class, geographical and ethnic biases in higher education. Would-be reformers in government should therefore take note. Against this background, the structural reforms (an enlarged and more adult oriented secondary system, an enlarged tertiary system, flexibility across sectors) make sense only when coupled with the longer-term cultural, motivational and economic considerations listed in the last chapter. If there are to be changes in access to privilege, the authors conclude, a coherent strategy is needed which involves collaboration at all levels of the system. At the moment we have neither - we might if government, co-ordinating authorities, systems and institutions reflected on and took up the challenges contained in this important book.

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* POLICIES, PROVISIONS AND PARTICIPATION

. ENROLMENTS, ACCESS, PARTICIPATION AND RETENTION: TERTIARY EDUCATION'S TRENDY STATISTICS

by Don Brewster,^{*} Leslie Riggs,^{*} and Carol Ey^{*}

Since 1982 policies relating to post-compulsory education in Australia have been directed towards expansion; this expansion has been described and quantified in various ways. Policy statements have called for increases in

- . enrolments in higher education
- . access to universities - particularly for low income and other groups
- . participation levels for youth
- . retention in upper secondary education.

The purpose of this paper is to discuss the concepts behind each of these terms and to explain the relationships between them. The paper also examines the standard statistics which are used to describe post-compulsory education and the extent to which each statistic has its limitations. We start with what appears to be the most straightforward - enrolments.

Enrolments

Enrolment statistics usually tell us 'how many students there are'. But there can be a difference between the number of enrolments and the number of students enrolled. Multiple enrolments (that is, the same student being counted twice if she or he is enrolled in more than one course) are the main problem which can be encountered. The need to eliminate multiple enrolments was one reason for TAFE statistics in which multiple enrolments are 'netted out'. The effect was to produce a total number of students in TAFE (streams 1-5) of 692,014; without the netting out process the total of enrolments would have been at least 750,000. Multiple enrolments can also occur between schools and TAFE. For example, school students may attempt through TAFE one or more matriculation units not taught at their local school. They may therefore be counted twice as candidates for the matriculation examination. Such issues bedevil analysis of statistics relating to end-of-school examinations.

In higher education there are few problems of multiple enrolments but there are differences of approach to the issue of including as an enrolment those people undertaking single subjects not leading to examinations and/or awards. In comparing enrolment statistics between institutions or years it is important to ensure that a consistent approach is taken to these 'miscellaneous students'.

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It should also be noted that school and higher education statistics have a census day; the data show the number of 'active' enrolments on that day. TAFE, because of its different array of courses, uses cumulative enrolment data over the whole year. TAFE also must use its own definition of the term 'full-time'. This can lead to problems of inter-sectoral comparison, but given the nature of TAFE courses it would seem inappropriate to try to fit TAFE statistics into the mould of those of higher education. Another difference between higher education and TAFE statistics is that there is no collection of the enrolments in higher education which equates with TAFE Stream 6; that is, adult or continuing education.

Enrolment data for higher education are sometimes presented in terms of equivalent full-time students (EFTS), or student load. Each of these terms has its own set of definitions and conventional uses for each sector. It must be noted however that neither counts 'people' but rather the relative 'size' of institutions or faculties. For this reason policies which concern access and participation cannot be expressed in terms of EFTS or student load.

Appendix A provides information on the sources of education enrolment statistics and on the major features of the collections.

Access

The term access is not generally used in relation to secondary education because State Education Departments are usually required to provide secondary education for all who seek to enrol. Tertiary education institutions on the other hand have the right to accept or reject applications from students at the point of initial entry. (They do not retain this right after initial selection; their decisions then being generally confined by rules and statutes.) Access is related to the provision of sufficient places so that people who want to enrol and who have the minimum acceptable entry qualifications can proceed to enrol. But the general use of the term often implies far more than this. Access can be denied if there are not reasonable student aid measures; or if an institution is too far away from home or work. Access for women with children can be influenced by the presence or absence of child care. Access can also be denied if there are not adequate opportunities for people to acquire basic entry qualifications. Clearly such factors are subjective; there will be no unanimity of opinion on whether individuals are denied access or whether they are simply unprepared to make the sacrifices which might be quite proper in the circumstances.

There is a component of the concept of access which can be measured. It is the number of people who applied for admission to a course (or to a range of courses) who were qualified to enter but who were refused a place. The main method by which this form of access measure is estimated is by reference to data from admission offices. But there are pitfalls. In TAFE there is double counting when individuals seek access to more than one institution or course. This can be avoided in higher education by using joint admission centres' data which net out multiple applications within a State. But even here, the number of people not offered any course of their choice does not represent a true measure of 'access denied'; some people have expectations which are unrealistic and apply for too narrow a range of courses at too few institutions. Still others would have refused an offer

TABLE 1
STUDENTS COMMENCING UNDERGRADUATE BACHELOR DEGREES
AT UNIVERSITIES(a) BY HIGHEST QUALIFICATION ON COMMENCEMENT,
1977 TO 1983

	Final school examination		Complete or Incomplete Higher Education qualification	Other(b)	Total
	Previous year	Other			
1977(c)	21427	4705	8979	3763	38874
1979	19478	4277	9258	7602	40615
1981	19111	4806	9446	7773	41136
1982	19216	4933	8902	7106	40157
1983	19360	4765	8804	7452	40381

(a) Excludes RMC Duntroon, RMC Jervis Bay and RAAF Academy Point Cook.

(b) Includes those entering under Mature Age and other special entry provisions, overseas qualifications, other non-higher education qualifications and those for whom previous qualifications were not stated.

Source: Commonwealth Tertiary Education Commission

TABLE 2
STUDENTS COMMENCING AT COLLEGES OF ADVANCED EDUCATION(a)
BY HIGHEST QUALIFICATION ON COMMENCEMENT,
1977 TO 1983

	Final school examination		Complete or Incomplete Higher Education qualification	Other(b)	Total
	Previous year	Other			
1977	20481	6494	19286	10358	56619
1979	19921	7229	24197	11419	62766
1981	18189	7298	28208	14694	68389
1982	17459	7729	26144	14644	65976
1983	18171	7810	26563	16054	68598

(a) Includes the Institutes of Advanced Education in universities.

(b) Includes those entering under Mature Age and other special entry provisions, overseas qualifications, other non-higher education qualifications and those for whom previous qualifications were not stated.

Source: Commonwealth Tertiary Education Commission

even if it had been made. In higher education in Australia in the last decade it is only in 1983 that there has been clear evidence that students with minimal qualifications, willing to accept a range of courses and willing to enrol at any institution in their State have been denied access. Prior to 1983 there may have been geographic imbalances but there were few examples of a general shortage of higher education places.

From the point of view of education providers, access relates to the number of places made available each year to new students. This concept of access is one on which statistics can be collected. In TAFE, statistics on 'commencing students' for all States will be available for the first time for 1982. For higher education there is a range of statistics available; Tables 1 and 2 provide those most commonly used.

In universities the main statistic which measures access is 'students commencing undergraduate bachelor degrees'. Table 1 provides this statistic in terms of the qualifications of students commencing. For universities overall, the number of such commencers has remained fairly static in recent years, but there has been a decline in the number of commencers who are direct-from-school. Counted among 'direct-from-school' are those overseas students who complete Year 12 in Australia in order to qualify for entrance to higher education. The number of such students has been increasing quite sharply over recent years and this has masked the extent of the decline of young Australians proceeding directly to higher education. Table 3 provides estimates of overseas students transferring from Year 12 to higher education.

TABLE 3

ESTIMATES OF OVERSEAS STUDENTS ENTERING TERTIARY EDUCATION
FROM AUSTRALIAN SECONDARY SCHOOLING,
1977 TO 1984

	Year 12 previous year(a)	Entering tertiary education	
		University	Other
1977	735	560	140
1978	665	505	125
1979	810	615	155
1980	865	660	165
1981	815	620	155
1982	1070	810	200
1983	1687	1280	320
1984	3104	2360	590

(a) Until 1982, data was collected only as 'Senior Secondary'. The Year 12 population for these years has been estimated from the 1982 and 1983 data.

Source: Based on statistics supplied by the Department of Education and Youth Affairs.

In the advanced education sector there is not the same concept of 'undergraduate bachelors degree' because Undergraduate 1 (UG1) courses are not often designed to convert diplomas to degrees. Some students commencing UG1 courses are already 'graduates' who are not back-tracking in any way, but rather using a UG1 course for exactly the same purposes as others might use a Postgraduate 1 (PG1). Statistics on commencing students in advanced education reflect this; they cover all courses and thus have a high proportion of students with previous qualifications.

Table 2 shows the number of students commencing advanced education courses. There has been a significant increase since 1977; but again there was a decline in the numbers of direct school leavers until 1982, offset by an increase in mature age students and those who have had some previous record of tertiary education. Table 4 examines the decline in the number of direct-from-school entrants to higher education by comparing them with the 17 year age cohort and the Year 12 cohort. The decline in the proportion of Year 12 students who proceed to higher education has been substantial, from 54.3 per cent in 1974 to 41.9 per cent in 1983. These statistics tend to indicate that there has been a reduction in 'access' for school leavers. However as noted earlier there is little evidence of an increase in the number of well qualified students being 'turned away' from higher education in the period 1975 to 1982.

It is perhaps easiest to appreciate the relationships between enrolments, participation and access by considering what happened between 1982 and 1983. Tables 5 and 6 provide the relevant statistics. In summary, there was a quite significant increase in total enrolments (2,000 in universities; 4,700 in CAEs). None of the increase in university enrolments was due to increased intake, and only 2,600 additional new students entered advanced education. Thus the bulk of the increase in total enrolments arose not because of increasing numbers of new students but because of higher rates of re-enrolment (including students who had a break in their studies).

Table 6 shows that this higher rate of re-enrolment is reflected in participation rate statistics. In 1983 there were quite significant increases in youth participation in higher education (as measured by these statistics), yet there was not a corresponding increase in access to higher education. This illustrates the weakness of using participation rates alone, or enrolment levels alone, or student load alone as a means to quantify educational targets and objectives.

Participation

Participation in education is a term which has become somewhat over-used in recent years. It has two related yet distinct meanings. The first is the proportion of the population (cohort) who are/were enrolled in a particular year. The second is the proportion of the population cohort who have been/will have been enrolled by the time they reach a certain age. (The grammarian will distinguish between these two uses of the term participation; the first is the simple present or simple past tense, the second is the present perfect simple or past perfect simple tense.) In both cases enrolments are compared with relevant populations. And there's the rub.

TABLE 4

STUDENTS COMMENCING COURSES AT UNIVERSITIES AND COLLEGES OF ADVANCED EDUCATION (a)
DIRECT FROM SCHOOL, SELECTED YEARS, AUSTRALIA

	1974	1976	1978	1980	1981	1982	1983
Population aged 17 in previous year ('000)	231.5	245.5	253.1	263.5	261.8	261.2	255.0
Final year school population in previous year	76,860	82,033	88,421	90,391	89,038	88,329	89,645
Students commencing direct from school							
- Number	41,720	41,918	40,327	38,208	37,336	36,719	37,571
- As a % of previous year final year school population	54.3	51.1	45.6	42.3	42.0	41.5	41.9
- As a % of previous year 17 year old population	18.0	17.1	15.9	14.5	14.3	14.0	14.7
Full-time students commencing direct from school							
- Number	37,406	38,729	36,854	34,440	33,793	33,644	35,181
- As a % of all students commencing direct from school	89.7	92.4	91.4	90.1	90.5	91.6	93.6
- As a % of previous year 17 year old population	16.2	15.8	14.6	13.1	12.9	12.9	13.8

(a) Excludes students attending RMC Duntroon, RANC Jervis Bay and advanced education courses in TAPE and non-government institutions.

Source: Commonwealth Tertiary Education Commission

TABLE 5

INTAKES, ENROLMENTS AND STUDENT LOAD IN HIGHER EDUCATION,
BY SECTOR, 1982 AND 1983

	Intakes			Enrolments			Student Load/EFTS		
	1982	1983	Change	1982	1983	Change	1982	1983	Change
<u>Universities(a)</u>									
Higher Degree	7411	6573	-838	23,344	23,500	+156	29,462	30,167	+705
OTHD - Bachelor									
Degree	41229	41443	+214	131,324	132,602	+1278	n.a.	n.a.	
- Other	8053	8484	+431	12,021	12,537	+516	n.a.	n.a.	
Total	49282	49927	+645	143,345	145,139	+1794	114,587	116,503	+1916
TOTAL	56693	56500	-193	166,689	168,639	+1950	144,049	146,670	+2621
<u>Advanced Education(b)</u>									
Total	65976	68598	+2622	168,588	173,283	+4695	123,192	128,000	+4808

(a) Excludes RMC Duntroon, RANC Jervis Bay and RAAF Academy Point Cook.

(b) Colleges of Advanced Education and Institutes of Advanced Education in Universities.

Source: Commonwealth Tertiary Education Commission

TABLE 6

EDUCATION PARTICIPATION RATES OF 17-19 AND 20-24 YEAR OLDS
IN HIGHER EDUCATION BY FULL-TIME AND PART-TIME,
BY SEX

		Full-time		Part-time		Total
		Univer- sities	Advanced education	Univer- sities	Advanced education	higher education
17-19 year olds						
Males	1975	6.0	3.7	0.4	0.8	10.9
	1980	5.0	3.2	0.4	0.9	9.5
	1982	4.8	3.3	0.4	0.8	9.4
	1983	4.9	3.6	0.3	0.8	9.5
Females	1975	4.5	6.0	0.3	0.4	11.0
	1980	4.0	5.3	0.3	0.6	10.1
	1982	4.2	5.0	0.3	0.5	10.0
	1983	4.4	5.2	0.3	0.5	10.4
Persons	1975	5.3	4.8	0.4	0.6	11.0
	1980	4.5	4.2	0.3	0.7	9.8
	1982	4.5	4.2	0.3	0.7	9.6
	1983	4.7	4.4	0.3	0.6	10.0
20 to 24 year olds						
Males	1975	5.0	2.6	1.5	2.0	11.1
	1980	4.4	2.5	1.3	2.0	10.2
	1982	4.2	2.4	1.1	1.9	9.6
	1983	4.2	2.6	1.1	1.9	9.7
Females	1975	2.6	2.5	0.9	0.8	6.9
	1980	2.7	2.8	0.9	1.4	7.8
	1982	2.8	2.6	0.9	1.3	7.7
	1983	2.9	2.7	0.9	1.3	7.8
Persons	1975	3.8	2.6	1.2	1.4	9.0
	1980	3.6	2.6	1.1	1.7	9.0
	1982	3.5	2.5	1.0	1.6	8.6
	1983	3.6	2.6	1.0	1.6	8.8

Source: Commonwealth Tertiary Education Commission

In higher education the relevant population has been changed a number of times. The former Universities Commission compared total university enrolments to the 17-22 year old age group; in its 1982-84 triennial report CTEC used the 17-29 year old age group. In Learning and Earning CTEC used age-specific participation rates; these compare the number of students of each age with the age cohort. In considering age-specific participation rates between years, or between States, the general age distribution of students must be taken into account. For example in comparing the participation rate of 17 year olds in school (or 18 year olds in higher education) it must be remembered that some States (such as South Australia) have a greater proportion of students who finish secondary school at the age of 16. They are thus excluded from school at the age of 17 because they have already completed. The same considerations apply to comparisons over time. In some States an increasing proportion of students are now completing secondary education at age 16 rather than 17. This can give an illusory trend showing a decline in 17 year age participation in secondary education. To avoid these problems it is possible to use age-weighted participation rates which take into account the differing age structures. Table 7 shows a variety of ways in which Year 12 participation can be measured, and compares these with 'apparent retention rates' which are discussed below. Table 6 shows an update of age specific participation rates for higher education. It illustrates the change which has taken place in youth participation since 1980 and brings home the error of confusing the term 'access' with the term 'participation'.

Measures of what the grammarian would call 'perfect simple' participation are neither perfect nor simple; few researchers have attempted them. Among those who have are Karmel (1966) and Anderson and Vervoorn (1983). This concept of 'lifetime participation' is difficult to measure because of problems with the statistics and because the information is often well out-of-date for any current policy purposes. Few people are interested in what the chances of participation were for the cohort of people now 40 years of age; of more importance is the chance for people now aged 18 to have participated in tertiary education by the time they reach 40. In Appendix B we have attempted some estimates on this basis. They assume that current rates of age-specific participation will continue at their present levels. The Appendix notes the rough nature of these estimates which are that by age 40 the following proportions of young Australians will have enrolled in a formal post-secondary course:

<u>Sector</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Universities and CAEs	23
TAFE (Streams 1-4)	39
Other (nursing, police, etc.)	9
Total	71

The fact that about 70 per cent of Australians are likely to participate in formal post-secondary education sets into context the often quoted statistic that only 36 per cent of young Australians complete a full secondary education. About 1 in 2 Australians who undertake post-secondary study do so without completing a full secondary school education.

TABLE 7

COMPARATIVE MEASURES OF PARTICIPATION IN THE FINAL YEAR OF SCHOOLING BY STATE, 1982

Column	Apparent Retention Rate to Final Year	Age-specific participation rates					Participation based on 17 year old cohort (a)	Age-weighted participation rates		
		15	16	17	18	19		School only	School and TAFE Stream 5(b)	School and 17 year olds in TAFE Streams 3, 4 and 5(c)
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
New South Wales	33.7	..	1.2	24.4	6.2	0.7	32.8	32.4	34.8	35.5
Victoria	34.3	..	2.1	25.1	4.9	1.4	33.6	33.4	44.7	40.3
Queensland	42.1	0.1	17.1	18.2	2.3	1.2	38.8	38.9	39.1	41.6
South Australia	41.0	0.3	22.2	16.4	2.2	0.9	41.7	42.0	43.1	43.5
Western Australia	37.4	0.1	15.2	17.5	1.6	1.3	35.6	35.6	37.9	36.8
Tasmania	21.9	..	2.3	16.3	2.8	1.1	22.6	22.5	23.9	24.7
Northern Territory	18.2	0.5	6.6	6.9	1.7	..	15.2	15.6	16.2	17.9
Australian Capital Territory	72.5	..	2.0	46.1	16.4	4.2	69.5	68.7	71.4	71.5
Australia	36.3	0.1	7.3	22.2	4.5	1.1	35.2	35.1	39.3	38.7

(a) Final year students as a proportion of the population aged 17.

(b) Includes TAFE Stream 5 students aged 19 and under, who studied on an internal basis with 540 or more contact hours per year (i.e. 'full-time').

(c) Includes TAFE Stream 3, 4 and 5 students aged 17 who studied on an internal basis with 540 or more contact hours in the year.

Source: Retention Rates - Department of Education and Youth Affairs
Participation Rates - Commonwealth Tertiary Education Commission

Retention

The term retention is generally used to describe the proportion of students who remain at school beyond the compulsory school attendance age. The most commonly quoted retention statistics are 'apparent grade retention rates'. These measure the number of students in Year 11 or Year 12 expressed as a proportion of the corresponding group who commenced secondary education (at Years 7 or 8) the appropriate number of years ago. These statistics are called 'apparent' grade retention rates because no account is taken of inter-school, inter-system, inter-State or international migration over the 5 or 6 year period. Nor do they take into account the number of students who repeat Year 12. In this the statistics are often grossly misused. For example, in most States there is a transfer of students from public to private schools during upper secondary education. This causes apparent retention rate statistics for public schools to be reduced and those for private schools to be increased. At the extreme, a school with a waiting list can have 100 per cent retention (or more) to Year 12 no matter how many of its pupils leave school before completing Year 12.

Another major problem with the use of these retention rate statistics is the differing school/TAFE interface among States and school systems. For Victoria, Marginson (1982) has calculated the adjusted retention rates if account is taken of the number of government school students who transfer to the Tertiary Orientation Program (TOP). Statistics on TOP-equivalent programs in other States are not readily available. However a similar concept is to calculate the number of people who complete a 'full' secondary education by adding to Year 12 enrolments those teenagers in full-time Stream 5 TAFE courses (although not all these courses are of the matriculation type). Table 7 Column 9 provides this statistic as one of the comparative measures of Year 12 (and equivalent) participation.

However, there is now such a broad range of courses available in schools which do not lead to 'matriculation' that it is difficult to exempt any full-time TAFE course in Streams 3, 4 and 5 being undertaken by teenagers from the category of 'equivalent to Year 11 or Year 12' even though some of them will be being studied by students who have also undertaken Year 12 at school. Thus Table 7 column 10 shows the rates if all full-time students in Streams 3 to 5 who are aged 17 are regarded as undertaking studies which are equivalent to Year 12.

International Comparisons

In the paragraphs above we have set out a range of factors which limit the use of education statistics for comparisons between years, between States, between sectors. These problems are compounded when international comparisons are made. For example, in Australia trade training is undertaken by a work/study combination and the 'study' is usually classified as 'part-time'. Were we to classify the total apprenticeship package as 'full-time' training the effect on our education statistics would be dramatic. Praetz (1983) provides a detailed set of statistics for Victorian teenagers on this basis. Australia also excludes most nursing, police and armed forces training from its education statistics; it is not clear that all other countries do the same. Structural and nomenclature differences also affect meaningful international comparisons. It is clear, nevertheless, that upper secondary education participation in Australia is

low by international standards. It is much less certain that, if TAFE is included, our rates of total tertiary education participation are low by international comparison. In this context it must be noted that in Australia TAFE provides a range of vocational programs in Streams 1 to 4 which in some overseas countries would be undertaken in institutions classified as higher education and by students classified as full-time. What appears to be the case is that some countries achieve high levels of participation in higher education because they include a wider spectrum of courses and institutions. They do not reserve names like 'university' or 'degree' for a select range of institutions or courses. To put it another way, they offer a greater variety of middle level courses and have more 'less-than-first-rate' institutions. It is a matter for debate as to whether Australia should follow that pattern of tertiary education as a means of increasing participation and access.

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APPENDIX A

SOURCES OF ENROLMENT DATA

Schools. The most generally useful and consistent sources of data relating to schools are the Statistical Monographs produced by the Statistics Unit of the Commonwealth Department of Education and Youth Affairs. These cover school leavers, school enrolment projections, and age participation and apparent grade retention rates, and are produced annually.

Official statistics on school enrolments and staffing are published by the Australian Bureau of Statistics. Up to 1981 these are found in the Schools Australia bulletin (catalogue no. 4202.0). From 1982, two separate bulletins will be published: National Schools Collection, Government Schools, Australia (catalogue no. 4215.0) and Non-Government Schools, Australia (catalogue no. 4216.0). The publication of two separate bulletins is made necessary because of the introduction of a new collection methodology for government schools in 1981. There are some differences in definitions between the two collections and some care should be exercised in using these data. Data for earlier years also has some inconsistencies in the treatment of pre-school/kindergarten enrolments in some States. ABS bulletins are supplemented by publications of the Commonwealth Schools Commission.

TAFE. The 'official' series of statistics relating to TAFE are published in the CTEC's Selected TAFE Statistics; other TAFE statistics are found in CTEC reports. A major break in the series occurs between 1980 and 1981.

Higher Education. ABS catalogues no. 4208.0 and 4206.0 present university and advanced education course enrolment data respectively, as do the CTEC annual publications Selected University Statistics and Selected Advanced Education Statistics. ABS and CTEC publications differ in their coverage: for universities, ABS data includes students at the three military establishments associated with universities, CTEC statistics in general exclude these students. For advanced education, the differences are even greater, ABS publications being generally confined to students enrolled in advanced education courses at recognised colleges of advanced education; while the CTEC has since 1980 been moving progressively toward providing data relating to the full range of advanced education provision by all institutions. Users of advanced education statistics need to take care to ensure that comparisons over time are actually comparing like with like; the changes in the CTEC statistics reflect significant changes in the advanced education system over the last decade.

APPENDIX B

ESTIMATES OF THE PROPORTION OF THE POPULATION WHO WILL
PARTICIPATE IN POST-SCHOOL EDUCATION OR TRAINING
BY AGE 40

This is an attempt to measure the proportion of each age cohort who will have enrolled in some form of post-school education by age 40, if current enrolment patterns continue. It is not an estimate of the proportion of the population now aged 40 who have experienced post-school education, nor is it a measure of those who complete such education. Where possible, 'double counting' has been avoided by considering only the highest level of education attempted.

Universities and Colleges of Advanced Education

Entrants to universities and colleges of advanced education are generally required to give details of previous experience in higher education when they enrol. From this information, details of those entering higher education for the first time by age can be obtained, and thus the proportion of each age group who enter higher education each year. The following table shows these proportions for 1981.

INITIAL ENTRANTS TO UNIVERSITIES AND COLLEGES OF ADVANCED
EDUCATION AS A PROPORTION OF THE RELEVANT AGE COHORT, 1981

<u>Age</u>	<u>Proportion (%)</u>
Under 17	0.22
17	3.82
18	6.86
19	4.37
20	1.53
21	0.77
22 to 29	0.43
30 to 39	0.25

Assuming that these rates remain relatively constant, some 23 per cent of an age cohort will experience higher education by age 40.

TAFE

As noted in paragraphs in the text there is no distinct boundary between 'secondary' and 'tertiary' or 'post-school' courses, particularly in the TAFE sector. In this calculation, TAFE Stream 5 enrolments are excluded because courses in this Stream are by nature 'preparatory' to other studies.

There are no data available on initial entrants to TAFE courses. However, it is probable that most of those commencing TAFE for the first time are in the 17 to 21 year old age group as is the case for higher education. The age-specific participation rate for this age group in TAFE Streams 1 to 4 is about 17 per cent, while in universities and CAEs it is about 10 per cent. If it is assumed that the age distribution of initial entrants is similar for the two sectors, and that the number of such entrants is in proportion to the number of enrolments (and thus age-specific participation rates), then applying the ratio of 17 to 10 to the lifetime participation rate in universities and CAEs produces an estimate of participation in TAFE of some 39 per cent.

In support of this ratio of participation in TAFE to participation in higher education, 1981 census data indicated that at least 22.1 per cent of the population aged 25 to 34 had a trade or technician qualification as their highest educational qualification, while 13.4 per cent had a diploma, degree or higher qualification. While this data is self-reported, and hence subject to some error, it seems reasonable to assume that the proportion of TAFE to higher education is about right.

It should also be noted that some 22 per cent of 18 year olds alone participate in TAFE Streams 1 to 4, and when it is considered that a significant number of people begin TAFE courses at age 19 or over and that some will have already participated and left before 18, this figure of 39 per cent does not appear unreasonable.

Other Forms of Education and Training

The calculations in the text covered universities and CAEs. Some accredited advanced education courses are also conducted in TAFE institutions, non-government teachers colleges and other non-government institutions such as theological colleges. It is estimated that these institutions have an annual intake of some 2,500 'new' students.

There are a variety of courses conducted outside the formal education system which can be considered equivalent to tertiary. For example, most of the training of nurses has been conducted in hospitals and the student nurses have not been described as 'undertaking education'. Similarly, police academies and defence training establishments are not classed as educational institutions. These institutions provide formal education of a similar type and nature to higher education or TAFE, and their awards are recognised from one State to another. It is therefore reasonable to regard these forms of vocational education as a part of the total provision of opportunities for post-school education/training.

In addition, it is estimated that over 13,000 people undertake courses in non-government business colleges each year. A large number of these are equivalent to courses in TAFE institutions.

In producing these estimates no account has been taken of training programs conducted internally by firms, organisations or even industries which are not generally included when considering education systems. It must be noted, however, that some of these programs are similar to those taught in tertiary institutions and can take the place of more formal vocational training.

In those areas where reasonable estimates can be made (advanced education courses conducted at other than recognised CAEs, nursing, non-government business colleges, the defence and police forces) it appears that over 24,000 people each year enter these programs. This implies that at least 9 per cent of any age cohort participate in these programs by age 40.

Total Educational Participation

The estimates provided above show that by age 40 about:

- . 23 per cent of the population participate in higher education
- . 39 per cent participate in TAFE tertiary courses
- . 9 per cent participate in other forms of equivalent training.

While these estimates have attempted to remove double-counting there will inevitably be some overlap (for example, nurses or police undertaking courses in higher education as a follow-up from their initial training) but the extent of this is probably not great. Therefore, in total, it appears that some 70 per cent of the population participate in some type of formalised education or training at the post-school level.

* * * * *

. CO-ORDINATION OF POLICY AND PRACTICES*

by P.E.F. Kirby**

Since consciousness of the problems of young people in education and the labour market was raised in the mid-1970s, efforts have been made to provide a co-ordinated approach to tackling the difficulties. New organisational arrangements have been introduced and modified, but without any noticeable improvement in the consistency and integration of government policies and programs for the young.

Co-operation or Competition?

The problems of co-ordinating policies and programs across government departments and agencies for common interest groups have been obvious for more than a decade. These problems still confound those responsible for Aboriginal Affairs, although many different approaches to organisation of services for Aborigines have been tried. The Royal Commission on Australian Government Administration (AGPS, 1976) drew attention to the deficiencies in co-ordination of Commonwealth services and the New South Wales Commission to Review NSW Government Administration (November 1977) made the same kind of criticisms.

The co-ordination of policies and programs on education, training and employment involves many large and important government departments and agencies as well as public institutions and private organisations. Some of these bodies have not been noted for co-operation with others in the field. A good deal of criticism has been directed at the absence of co-ordination and the failure to integrate policies and programs for the young. The introduction of a significant youth affairs responsibility and its attachment to the Commonwealth's Employment Department apparently was not successful. The transfer of that responsibility to the Commonwealth's Education Department has yet to show an improvement. The rivalry between education and employment does not appear to have lessened, if the present array of programs and services for the young provided by both departments is a reliable indicator.

Too Many Chiefs?

The Commonwealth's Education Department commented in its 1976 submission to the OECD review of Australian education policy on the transition from school to work (OECD, 1976):

Visiting educationalists ... dwelt unfavourably on what they saw as the centralised and bureaucratic nature of the structures through which education in the States has been organised and administered (para.1.1.8).

* Originally prepared for a Round Table of the Australian Association for Education Research (AARE) Conference, entitled The Role of Education in Youth Policy, November 1983.

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Apart from the Commonwealth and State departments and Commissions responsible for schools, there are:

- . non-government schools' organisations (Catholic and non-Catholic)
- . a Commonwealth Tertiary Education Commission and its Councils on universities, CAEs and TAFE
- . State equivalents of the Commonwealth bodies on tertiary education
- . organisations representing private colleges
- . bodies representing community education organisations.

The evidence of co-operation between these agencies is small: the evidence of co-ordination of their many varied efforts even smaller.

This range of bodies is paralleled in the employment and training area. There are Commonwealth and State departments of employment (or labour). Although the State departments as a whole are not involved to the same degree as the Commonwealth in training and employment, in NSW the State labour department runs the vocational guidance service and in most States there are separate apprenticeship or industrial training bodies. Additionally, there is a National Training Committee with national and State industry training committees. The rate of growth in expenditure on training and employment for the young of these bodies in recent years exceeds the rate of growth of expenditure by the education bodies.

The States have also taken up the Commonwealth's lead in creating a youth affairs 'portfolio'. In an effort to co-ordinate youth services, these groups have extended the interest to related issues of income support, shelter and health. As a result, the comprehensive youth policy is now a commonly expressed objective.

Co-ordination via Transition?

For many, the introduction of the Transition from School to Work Program (now the Participation and Equity Program - PEP) brought hope of greater co-ordination and integration of Commonwealth and State education and employment policies and programs. Instead of building on existing structures, however, the Transition Program has moved to develop substantially separate administration. Insofar as greater co-ordination and co-operation have been achieved, it appears to be only at the margin of education and employment activities. There is, in fact, some indication of an increase in competition between TAFE and schools in the Transition Program. The barriers between the two sectors appear to be partly attitudinal (blaming each other for the existing education and training problems of the young and each seeing itself as the only sector likely to find lasting solutions) and partly institutional. (The institutional factors appear to adversely affect co-operation between all educational sectors.)

The PEP is likely to face some of the same attitudinal and institutional difficulties the Transition Program confronted. These arise from a view that past activities were mostly sound and appropriate, and therefore new initiatives should be designed to 'add on' to what's there.

In concluding the 1981 Conference on Youth Employment, Education and Training (ANU, 1981), Dr Beatrice Reubens observed:

According to Keeves et al., 'a high level of youth unemployment disrupted policies and practices that had evolved in this country to provide for a relatively smooth transition from school to work and to adult life'. As can be gathered from Dr Pankhurst's paper, the view in OECD and in a number of member countries departs markedly from the Keeves' position. I think a case could be made that in Australia also the surge in youth unemployment has merely revealed faults in the transition process that were somewhat obscured by the earlier full employment.

Co-ordination or Command?

The relevance of the existing boundaries between education sectors, and between education and employment and training programs is increasingly coming under scrutiny as the labour market problems of the young become more entrenched. Divisions of responsibility between sectors and agencies will have to continue to be made, giving rise to problems of co-ordination.

At a time when considerable attention by both Commonwealth and States is directed to containing government expenditure, policies and programs for the young will need to rely more on improved co-ordination and co-operation between the many appropriate agencies than on additional resources to improve their effectiveness. The necessary improvements may be achieved by the kind of reshuffles of responsibility seen in the past. More likely, however, they will only be achieved if the Commonwealth plays a stronger role in administration of the programs, or if one Commonwealth and one State department is given the authority over the others to develop the policy, direct the programs and determine the resource allocation. The evidence from the Bill on PEP before the Commonwealth Parliament is that the Commonwealth has decided to take the stronger role in administration approach.

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AUSTRALIA. DEPARTMENT OF EMPLOYMENT AND YOUTH AFFAIRS and DEPARTMENT
OF SOCIAL SECURITY. SOCIAL WELFARE POLICY SECRETARIAT.

Income Support for Young People. A discussion paper.
Canberra: Office of Youth Affairs and Social Welfare
Policy Secretariat, January 1984 [125p.]

by C. Blakers

Income support arrangements for young people have been attracting increasing attention in recent years. This paper looks at some major issues involved and discusses possible future directions for reform. It draws attention to the fact that, while its focus is primarily on Commonwealth income support programs which provide direct cash assistance for young people (15-24 years), the important roles of welfare and other services provided at Commonwealth, State and local government levels and by community organisations should not be overlooked. The growing interest in income support arrangements has been stimulated in recent years by government and community concern in a number of areas: the low participation rates in post-compulsory education, particularly for disadvantaged groups; the low levels of education and of training of young people entering the workforce; high youth unemployment and the prospect that this will continue under the force of technological and industrial change. Out of these concerns, the Commonwealth Government has initiated the Participation and Equity Program (PEP) for schools and TAFE (see Newsletter, November 1983, p.32-44) as an important component in the overall framework of youth policies. Income support is another important component in such policies. This paper is produced as a basis for a public discussion of the principles, issues, options and priorities which will contribute to the development of government policies.

Chapter 2 outlines current arrangements, discussing the programs in the categories of those which provide payments directly to young people (such as Unemployment Benefits and TEAS) and those providing assistance to parents (such as family allowances). Further details are given in Appendices A and B.

The pressures for change, including those mentioned above, are discussed in Chapter 3 along with some of the more important proposals for youth allowances and for changes to existing programs. Chapter 4 identifies four main principles which could underlie changes in the income support structure for young people. In brief, these are that the income support arrangements: should be simple, consistent, easily understandable and equitable; should provide adequate financial support for all young people in need; should address the needs of disadvantaged groups and provide incentives for young people to participate in a comprehensive range of improved opportunities in education, training and employment; should recognise the growth of independence and self-determination for young people moving into adulthood, while not ignoring the responsibilities of the family. Finally, policies on income support for young people must be considered in the context of wider policies, priorities and financial constraints.

Against this background, Chapters 5 and 6 consider the issues and the options; and form the main substance of the paper. Among the main issues discussed in Chapter 5 are the complexity of present arrangements with

their differing eligibility, rates, income tests and taxation treatments; the adequacy of unemployment benefits and education allowances, particularly where these have to cover accommodation/housing expenses; the equity of the arrangements which differ so widely in their rates and conditions; the problems arising from different recipients for different assistance (the young person or the family). The question of differing incentive/disincentive effects on education participation for the different programs is elaborated, along with differing tax treatments and the level of priority which should be accorded to young people, given the needs of other groups in the community.

Chapter 6 presents four packages of options for consideration and discussion. It points out that the inter-relationship of the issues and the conflicts between many of them preclude easy solutions. In particular, there is a tension between seeking to increase incentives to education participation and ensuring adequacy of social security payments. The development of options therefore is an exercise in balancing priorities.

The four packages presented contain options to: provide greater consistency between Secondary Allowance Scheme (SAS) and TEAS, and between these and Unemployment Benefits; to simplify education and training allowances into a structure of age-related allowances including an option to give greater independence to students from age 21; to integrate education and social security payments; to increase rates of education allowance and unemployment benefits. For each package a number of specific options are listed and each is discussed in terms of advantages and disadvantages and of the implications for structures. For each also, estimated broad orders of magnitude of the gross costs are given.

The final section of Chapter 6 (and of the paper) provides an overview of the options, pointing out that those presented are not exhaustive; nor are they mutually exclusive. Some of them could be introduced relatively simply; others in stages. Many of the measures needed to reduce complexity and encourage further education participation would involve significant costs or major structural changes. To be useful, discussion must focus not only on the options which are feasible and desirable for young people and Australians generally, but also on the priorities to be accorded to one option as against another and to income support for young people as against other social and government priorities.

Further information may be obtained from:

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- Mr Vic Rogers, Policy Co-ordinator
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Department of Social Security
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YOUTH STUDIES: THE RESEARCH

LABOUR MARKETS AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Part 2

Preface

The Youth Labour Market: Trends and Patterns

A summary of the research

by C. Blakers

Some Labour Market Aspects of Youth Policy

by Richard Saeet

February 1984

PREFACE

Increasing attention is being given in Australia to the questions of where and how young people enter and leave the workforce and their place in and relationship with it. Much of this interest has been generated by increasing levels of youth unemployment, which give impetus to the search for understanding as a basis for remedies and action.

The effort in these directions has been somewhat belated and ad hoc, and major gaps are being identified in the statistical information available. Australia also lacks the solid basis of information which would have been provided by adequate and coherent longitudinal studies over the last two decades. However, an increasing amount of work is being undertaken and reported on.

This series of papers is attempting to draw together the research information which has come to the Clearinghouse, and, as occasion offers, to provide the insights which come from articles by persons with knowledge and interest in particular areas. In November 1983, the Clearinghouse summary outlined trends in the general labour market as a context for discussion of the youth labour market. Peter Stricker's paper synthesised recent research on youth unemployment, and the movements in and out of the labour market which help to produce the overall statistical picture. In this issue, trends and patterns in the youth labour market are summarised. To avoid undue repetition, reference will be made frequently to the summaries of research on School Leavers and School Stayers in the Clearinghouse Newsletter of February 1983 (p.21-47) as well as to the Newsletter of November 1983 (p.57-85).

In his paper, *Some Labour Market Aspects of a Youth Policy*, Richard Sweet points out the many things we don't know about the youth labour market and its relationship with education participation. He discusses the kind of research and information needed to form an adequate basis for policy formulation.

Surely I write not for the hopeful young.

Introduction: Youth and Labour Markets

Four marked trends in the Australian labour market were discussed in the Newsletter of November 1983: the changing patterns of industry and occupations, influenced particularly by technological change; the segmentation of the labour market; the changing patterns of employment; the levels of unemployment. These trends, along with a number of special factors such as youth wage levels and employer practices (to be discussed in a later paper), affect the opportunities for and patterns of employment of young people.

In a background report¹ prepared for the information of the OECD team who visited Australia in November 1983 to advise on youth policies and programs, the Department of Education and Youth Affairs (DEYA) raises the question of whether and to what extent it is valid to analyse the labour market on the basis of age, isolating the 15 to 19 year olds from the 20 to 24 year olds and both groups from the rest of the labour market and labour force (Chapter 3, p.57). It concludes that there is a case for looking at the group of 15-19 year olds separately, particularly males, since this age group can be generally distinguished by wage rates, comparative lack of skills and experience, job changing and the availability of apprenticeships. The distinctions for teenage females are more ambiguous but there still remains a basis for differentiation. For the 20-24 year old young adults, similar sets of common characteristics do not apply nor is information on this group as readily available as for teenagers. What needs to be recognised is that many of the present 20-24 year olds are in danger of becoming a permanently disadvantaged age cohort which 'will move through life on the fringes of the labour market' (p.57). Chapter 3 of the DEYA report provides information where appropriate and available on young adults as well as on teenagers. In this paper it is intended to focus principally on teenagers, because it is simpler to limit the summary in this way and because teenagers rapidly become young adults and some of them at least are in the process of establishing in our society a core of long-term unemployed and socially disadvantaged people.

Information and Research

Research into the Australian youth labour market does not as yet present a clear and comprehensive picture of how it works and whether or in what cases it discriminates against young people. Research studies have on the whole tended to be statistical analyses and fairly generalised or local and undertaken on a variety of research criteria, ends and bases. The most comprehensive and up-to-date statistical overview of the youth labour market and labour force is contained in the DEYA¹ report mentioned earlier, and this paper draws heavily on it, particularly for information on the last two years.

Under the impetus of high levels of youth unemployment, research has begun in the last few years to focus on the youth labour market in an effort to understand how it works and its patterns of employment and unemployment. Stricker (84/AB: 16) points out that the labour market for young people is both complex and dynamic, and the traditional distinctions between 'employed' and 'unemployed' are no longer sufficient to describe the various

combinations of employment, unemployment, education participation and non-labour force/non-education participation in which a young person can spend time simultaneously or sequentially (see also BLMR 84/AB: 19). Analysis of gross flows data undertaken in recent years by Gregory, Stricker, Foster and others is providing information on how young people move from one state to another (see Gregory and Stricker A25; Foster and Gregory A58; Trivedi 83/AB: 15; Stricker, Clearinghouse Newsletter, November 1983, Part 2, p.71-85). Analyses by Sweet and others of Census and Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) information have also contributed substantially to a growing understanding of youth in the labour market (see Sweet A18, 83/AB: 18, 84/AB: 14 and following article in this Bulletin).

However, the statistical information available for analysis of the youth labour market still leaves a good deal to be desired. The DEYA report¹ mentioned above outlines some of the gaps and inadequacies and Richard Sweet's paper in this Bulletin also discusses the needs in both information and analysis of available information.

There appears also to be very little research in Australia of the kind which provides insights into the actualities behind the statistical trends, such as longitudinal and case studies or studies directed to an intensive investigation of what happens to young people. The study by Williams *et al.* (B102) is unique in Australia in following through two national samples of school students from schooling into employment, unemployment and further education. Analysis of the post-school experiences of the older sample is currently being undertaken and should be a valuable contribution to knowledge about the labour market experiences of young people. Yet the periodical funding of this study has been precarious and its continuity by no means assured.

There have been a number of studies of destinations of school leavers (for example, King B35; Dunnell B15; Stoessiger 83/AB: 85), but few which throw more than incidental light on the experiences of school leavers in the labour market. Other studies such as the Markham and Reeders study in Victoria (83/AB: 27) provide information on particular aspects such as job-seeking behaviour. However, as far as the Clearinghouse is aware, there has been no Australian study in any way comparable with that of Ashton, Maguire and Garland in the U.K. (B46, 116). This study set out to investigate some of the differences in the structures of opportunity that faced young people entering the labour market in different parts of the country, and to establish how differences in the distribution of occupations, level of economic activity, industrial composition of the locality and employers' policies towards youth labour affected the opportunities available to young people in their early years at work; to investigate differences in the way in which the early work experience of young people was structured, both within and between different types of occupation.

Overall, the study found that women, ethnic minorities and young people were not competing for jobs in the same secondary labour market. Males and females rarely competed for the same jobs at any level in the labour market; a large part of the market for semi-skilled labour was closed to young people, while some jobs were closed to adults. Similarly, within the primary market, males and females rarely competed with each other, full-time and part-time workers were confined to separate markets, as, to a more limited extent, were young people and adults. In addition, almost all markets were differentiated by skill level. In many respects, the youth labour market was found to be distinct from that of adults, differing in its entry patterns and in the selection criteria used by employers. There were also great regional disparities found in the opportunities available to young people.

A wide range of specific inadequacies in information and research has been identified in studies and reports appearing in the Clearinghouse Abstracts over the last two years. It is hoped, later in this series of papers, to collate and list these as a possibly useful guide to needs in research and information; but among important areas mentioned many times as needing attention have been:

- . definitions of employment, unemployment and education participation
- . teenagers identified by Sweet who do not appear in any official statistics (Sweet 83/AB: 18)
- . particular groups of teenagers such as girls, migrants, aborigines, the disabled
- . the part-time labour market for young people: experiences and effects
- . teenage entry into career structures
- . the effects on the labour market of special factors such as youth wages, employer attitudes and practices, the decline in 'entry' jobs in industry
- . local/regional labour markets and youth experiences
- . categorisation of 'youth' in age groups 15-19 and 20-24 year olds.

Despite these inadequacies, there is much that can be and has been said on the youth labour market and the following summary may help to put the research and information together.

The Teenage Labour Force: Population Changes

The numbers of teenagers entering the labour force (that is, the labour supply) is obviously an important element in levels of youth unemployment. The numbers can be affected by population changes arising from changes in birth rates or from migration policies. Such changes have not been a significant influence on the teenage labour supply during the last two decades.

The Bureau of Labour Market Research (BLMR) report on Changes in the Youth Labour Market 1971-1981 (83/AB: 39) sums up the influence of population changes on the youth labour market as follows:

A prime exogenous influence on labour supply is changes in population. The number of persons in any demographic group who are members of the labour force is equal to the product of the population in that group and their labour force participation rate. In the absence of changes in the participation rate, changes in population will be reflected in identical proportional changes in the labour force. The civilian population aged 15 years or over grew by 21 per cent, or 1.9 million persons, over the past decade. Teenagers (15-19 year olds) and

young adults (20-24 year olds) had lower-than-average rates of population increase: 13 per cent and 14 per cent respectively. Mature adults (25 years and over) had a population increase of 23 per cent. Demographic factors have therefore not been a contributing factor in the worsening of the relative labour market position of youth in Australia and in fact have in general ameliorated their situation (p.2).

Over the last two decades between 1966 and 1982, the civilian population aged 15 years and over grew by about 39 per cent or 2.9 million persons, while the teenage population grew by only 22 per cent (BLMR 84/AB: 19):

In particular, since the commencement of the current recession in 1974, teenage population growth has been very slight and considerably less than that of adults. This suggests that because of their reduced rate of increase, the difficulties encountered by teenagers in the labour market in the recession have been less than they would have experienced if their population numbers had continued to grow at earlier rates (p.8-9).

[See also Stricker and Sheehan A41, p.177; DEYA report¹, p.71]

Education Participation and the Teenage Labour Supply

By far the greatest impact on the numbers of teenagers entering the labour force has been due to the choices made by teenagers, whether to continue full-time education, to combine education and work or to leave education altogether and enter the workforce.

Stricker and Sheehan (A41) point out that:

At a given point of time a teenager can be in one of four states (numbers in brackets give the number of teenagers in each situation at August 1980 and the proportion of teenagers in each situation);

- . in the labour force and not at school (672,000; 52.5 per cent)
- . in the labour force and at school (109,700; 8.6 per cent)
- . not in the labour force and at school (380,800; 29.7 per cent)
- . not in the labour force and not at school (117,900; 9.2 per cent) (p.181).

The opportunity for a fifth combination - part-time work/part-time school - has not so far been readily available though at least one experiment has been tried in South Australia (Delin C45) and though this may well become an important option for the future (see, for example, Shears and Matthews 83/AB: 67, p.33, 44).

The choices which lead teenagers into one or other of these categories may be voluntary or involuntary; they may be due to active decision-making or a passive drifting under force of circumstances. The factors which influence the choices and the outcomes are complex and inter-locking, but in all of them the conditions of the labour market play a central role either directly or indirectly, and sometimes in ways different from what might be expected. Closely linked with industrial/economic influences are government policies which may, intentionally or unintentionally, provide incentives to young people to enter the workforce or, alternatively, to continue their education. In recent years, government encouragement of apprenticeships has been an important influence on the choices of teenage males and negatively, of females. Current emphasis on retention and participation in education will, if successful, also have an impact on the teenage labour supply.

Given the extensive participation of teenagers in part-time work while they are still at school, it would be an over-simplification to say that teenage labour force participation and education participation are but two sides of the same coin. Nevertheless, the links are close and complementary.

The complementary nature of the relationship between education participation and workforce participation and the unpredictability of the balance between them can be seen in the developments of the last two decades. The buoyant job market of the 1950s and 1960s was accompanied by a declining rate of labour force participation by teenagers, as more students stayed on in education to gain the qualifications which would admit them to employment of high status and means. Stricker and Sheehan (A41) note that between August 1966 and August 1971 the full-time labour force participation of both male and female teenagers fell, reflecting the fact that teenagers were staying on longer at school (p.177). Gregory and Stricker (A25) comment that 'Between August 1966 and August 1974, the increase in school participation rates roughly absorbed the increase in the teenage male population (p.1.17). A turning point came in the early 1970s. Between August 1974 and August 1978 only 40 per cent of the teenage male population was absorbed by participation in education (A25, p.1.17), reflecting a decline in the education retention rate for males, though education retention rates for females continued to increase, more than absorbing the population increase for females (A25, p.1.17). Gregory and Stricker (A25) go on to point out that if female education participation rates had continued at about 80 per cent of the male rate as previously, the teenage labour supply would have increased (other things being equal) from 21 per cent to 30 per cent (p.1.20). Stricker and Sheehan (A41) show that

... between August 1971 and August 1980 the teenage labour force grew at an annual rate of 2.2 per cent, this being made up of an average rate of 1.3 per cent in the first three years and of 2.7 per cent in the five years to August 1980. By comparison, between August 1966 and August 1970 the teenage labour force declined by an average of 1.1 per cent per year. (p.177).

The Commonwealth Tertiary Education Commission Report (CTEC), Learning and Earning (83/AB: 27) comments that between 1975 and 1980:

Males aged 15-16 marginally increased their participation in full-time education, mostly at school with a small fraction at TAFE. However, females aged 15-16 substantially increased full-time education; the older age groups of females also increased their full-time participation. Males, on the other hand, show a decline for both the 17-19 and 20-24 age groups. Girls are remaining longer in full-time education at school, while boys are increasingly leaving school before completing a full secondary education (p.9).

The report goes on to comment somewhat ruefully on the difficulties of predicting the consequences for education participation of market forces, pointing out that analysis in 1972, given foreknowledge of a major economic recession, would have been confident then that education participation would have continued to grow strongly in the face of high youth unemployment (p.41). In fact, the opposite happened as far as males 17-19 years were concerned.

First indications of a further change in education participation trends appeared in 1981-82 with increasing participation rates for males as well as for females (CTEC 83/AB: 27). By 1983, the swing back to schooling was confirmed. The DEYA report¹ comments:

Figures for 1983 are not yet available, but preliminary estimates indicate that secondary school enrolments among students aged 15-17 increased by almost 30,000 (or 7 per cent) between April 1982 and April 1983, with male enrolments up by 23,600 (11.4 per cent) and females by 6,100 (2.9 per cent). School participation rates of 15-17 year olds in April 1983 were estimated to be identical, at about 60 per cent, for males and females (p.26).

.....

the sharply increased participation, especially among males, in 1983 represents a clear break in the trend, and is associated with the rapid deterioration in the youth labour market, which saw just on 80,000 full-time jobs held by teenagers disappear in 1982 and the number of new apprenticeships drop by about 30 per cent. Whether this increased participation is consolidated into a new trend will depend not only on developments in labour demand but also on the responsiveness of schools to the changing needs of young people (p.26).

Early experiences in 1984 seem to be confirming the strength of the trend back to education.

The effects of the changes in 1982/83 are to be seen in teenage employment and unemployment rates, as the following excerpt from the DEYA report indicates:

Thus the increase in teenage unemployment was 27,600 less than the fall in employment. This difference is explained by a fall in the civilian population aged 15 to 19 years of 10,800 and a fall in the teenage labour force participation rate from 59.6 per cent to 57.9 per cent. For teenage males the fall was from 62.0 per cent to 58.6 per cent whereas for teenage females there was a small increase from 57.0 to 57.1 per cent. Thus the number of teenagers in the labour force declined by 25,400 for males and 2,200 for females. Had the teenage population and labour force participation rates seen changes which paralleled those of the aggregate civilian population aged 15 years and over the increase in teenage unemployment and unemployment rates would have been much greater than they have been (p.67-68).

Behind the Trends: Making the Choices

When it comes to explaining the trends in education/workforce participation, the picture is much less clear. Lacking the insights provided by longitudinal studies and coherent case and areas studies, the gaps in understanding have to be filled in by piecing together what research is available and, in many cases, by resorting to speculation.

Perceptions of education exert a considerable influence, positively or negatively on the choices young people (and their families) make about their future. As discussed in the Newsletter of February 1983 (p.23-47), the commitment of Australians generally to education seems, to use Karmel's term, 'a shallow one'. It has been less to education as such than to education as a means to work - and through work to income, status and personal identity. Perceptions of the value of education as a means to occupational ends are themselves responsive to changing social and economic circumstances, so that different decisions about continuing education may be made by similar groups of young people at different times, depending on whether they see occupational advantage in continuing their full-time education or in taking jobs when they offer.

On the whole, however, and irrespective of employment circumstances, there is at one extreme of the educational achievement/occupational expectation range a group of students who will continue to perceive job and career advantages in remaining in education; at the other extreme is a group of students who will leave school at the earliest possible moment. The first group comprises those whose family background, traditions and encouragement and/or their own personal aspirations are a stimulus to high occupational aspirations and expectations, and therefore to gaining appropriate educational qualifications. The second group consists of those whose unsuccessful and unhappy experiences of schooling have generated in them low expectations, low concepts of their own capacities and a dislike of schooling which makes any alternatives to it seem desirable. In many cases, the decision to leave school has been taken in the early years of secondary schools and sometimes as far back as primary school.

Between the extremes of these two groups is a range of young people whose decisions to enter the labour market are or can be influenced by educational, personal, economic/industrial or other factors.

Thus it is important to recognise that the 'teenage labour supply' is not a homogeneous entity, but is closely related with patterns of education achievement in schools which, in turn, are closely linked with family social factors and background. The links between early school leaving and educational and social factors have already been discussed in a previous summary (Newsletter, February 1983) and there is no need to repeat the discussion. They are also outlined in the DEYA report¹ (p.26-28).

Thus, on all the evidence, the strongest influences on the choices made by young people to continue in education or to leave early and enter the workforce are those which stem from family background, circumstances and aspirations/expectations. But other factors can also influence the decisions, at least for those whose destinies are not so clearly pre-determined.

The Influences on Choice

The CTEC report (83/AB: 27) identifies four competing forces influencing young people in their decisions to remain in education or to enter the workforce. Two of them may act in favour of education:

- . the long-term Australian trend towards increased participation in full-time education by the young, reflecting the benefits of education both in personal and financial terms
- . the operation of the 'shelter effect', whereby adverse labour market conditions may have induced some young people to defer their entry to the full-time labour market and in the meantime to continue with their full-time education (p.50).

The other two factors may exert an influence in the opposite direction:

- . the perception (supported by evidence) of a decline in the real financial returns to education, particularly for the 'marginal' graduate of a higher education institution
- . the effect of tight labour market conditions in raising the appeal of 'full-time worker' status relative to that of 'full-time student'. Particularly to many of those with the ability to proceed to higher education, the very shortage of full-time jobs may have acted as an incentive rather than a deterrent to entering the labour market (p.51).

Besides these broad forces, and within them, are a number of more specific factors, many of which are inter-linked and any of which will have a weight varying with individual experiences and circumstances.

. The provisions of schooling: All the research of the last decade indicates that, for historical as well as social reasons, Australian schools have, in their aims, organisation and approaches, reflected the competitiveness, the discrimination and the deep inequalities of the social structure. Traditionally, they have directed most of their attention as well as their resources to the minority of their students who are academically inclined and able. The needs of the majority of students have been neither well considered nor well served. Among these, a great many have accommodated themselves in a greater or lesser degree to the structures and approaches of the academic 'mainstream', passively accepting the inevitable for the occupational rewards attendant on academic qualification (see, for example, Power B89). Others have been 'encouraged' out of schooling - many of them to become the long-term hard core unemployed identified by Stricker in the Newsletter of November 1983 (p.71-85). (See also Newsletter, February 1983, p.36-42).

The last few years and the stimulus of 'transition education' have in some areas demonstrated the capacities of schools to change student perceptions and experiences of education by a deliberate consideration of student needs: appropriate courses accompanied by more flexible structures; warmer and more personal relationships between teachers and students; teaching approaches which involve students as responsible individuals in their own learning (e.g. Campbell and McMeniman;² Middleton 83/AB: 56; Jones et al. 84/C: 17). Such changes, however, have not been widespread and have affected relatively few students. Even more importantly, they have not as yet been accorded the community and employer recognition which would make them an acceptable alternative to the orthodox examination-based educational qualifications generally demanded for employment or further study. The impetus of the Schools Commission Participation and Equity Program (PEP) may encourage acceptance of change in school systems and the community; it may also give necessary recognition and encouragement to those within schools and systems who are committed to meeting the needs of all students - and this does not exclude the most academically able, who may also benefit from teaching/learning approaches which recognise their individuality, their independence and their capacity for responsibility (e.g. Schools Commission A7; Kemmis et al. 83/AB: 118, 83/C: 74).

A recognition of schooling as contributing immediately and relevantly to their own development as persons could become a considerable factor in the choices teenagers make about when to leave education and enter the workforce.

. Provisions for particularly disadvantaged groups: It has been recognised within the last decade or so that some groups of young people suffer particular disadvantage in education and their prospects for employment. Among such groups are: young people in country and isolated areas; Aborigines; the disabled; migrants and others with language difficulties; girls.

For example, country students generally have to move out of their localities for post-compulsory education and employment and they are often reluctant to do so (Dunnell B15; Stoessiger B42, 43; DEYA report, p.46). Aborigines suffer similar disadvantages as well as the difficulties of adjusting to a different culture and way of life (e.g. Watts A75; McConnochie 83/AB: 97). The disabled are often isolated in their schooling and lack the opportunities for further education and training which are available to the community generally (Commonwealth Department of Education

83/AB: 94; Schools Commission AB; Knight and Scott C51; Ward, Parmenter et al. B93, C21; Walker 83/AB: 41; DEYA report p.46-47). Those with language difficulties are handicapped unless they are provided with the means to overcome the handicap in the form of suitable remedial and other assistance (Meade 83/AB: 120; Storer A40; Stricker and Sheehan A41; Wilson and Wyn 83/AB: 5-7; DEYA report, p.47-49). The provisions for and options of girls in education and later in work still tend to be circumscribed by traditional concepts of what is suitable for females (Sampson,³ Brown and Fitzpatrick 83/AB: 76; Firkin A36, 63; Keeves A39; Connell et al. B99). In all of these groups, disadvantage persists into higher education and employment (Elsworth and Day 83/AB: 88, 89, 131; DEYA Report¹; Anderson and Vervoorn 83/AB: 130).

Lacking adequate provisions for post-compulsory education and informed counselling and guidance on options, many of the young people in these groups will leave education to enter the workforce; and many of them will swell the ranks of the unskilled, the unemployed or the under-employed.

. Financial considerations: Among these considerations are the costs of keeping a student at school in terms of immediate expenses and current income foregone, to be weighed against possible (but now no longer certain) benefits in future income levels; the availability and levels of government financial assistance for school students as against immediate earnings or unemployment benefits; the levels and conditions of tertiary education assistance compared with, for example, levels of unemployment benefits.

Some little information is available to throw light on the weight probably given to these financial considerations, but this is an area where there has not been a great deal of intensive investigation. Moreover, in a sensitive area such as family financial circumstances, it is not to be assumed that the answers to questions by students or their families will necessarily reflect fully the influence of financial factors in decisions to leave school. However, a number of studies have indicated that immediate financial considerations have been a deterrent to continuing education for some students (Chapman and Thomson B50; Wray and Houlst 83/AB: 122). On the other hand, Beswick et al. (B110), in an evaluation of the Tertiary Education Allowance Scheme, found that financial considerations played only a small part in reasons for leaving school after Years 10 and 11. Of course, as Chapman and Thomson (B50) indicate, those students with serious financial difficulties are probably filtered out before Year 11 (see also the discussion of this issue in Review Paper No. 11 by King in this Bulletin).

Secondly, the effect of the recession in removing the certainty of high status and well paid employment for graduates may reduce the future income attractions of tertiary education (CTEC 83/AB: 27). On the other hand, graduates do get jobs even if not according to their qualifications and expectations; many early school leavers do not and, of those who do, many find that the jobs do not last beyond their teens. A further factor, however, may be entering the calculations on the benefits of post-school education and training. This is a growing awareness that employment in future will go to the skilled rather than the unskilled (e.g. ASTEC 84/AB: 3; Jones A47). A glance at employment vacancy lists in weekend newspapers is already confirming these trends.

Thirdly, it is sometimes suggested that the availability and levels of unemployment benefits are an inducement to some students to leave school and 'go on the dole' (e.g. Karmel A3). Recent research seems to indicate that this is not an influence - or at most a negligible one - on student choices (e.g. King 84/AB: 30 and Review Paper No. 11 in this Bulletin; BLMR 84/AB: 19; CTEC 83/AB: 27). Indeed, students seem to be well imbued with the 'work ethic' and to have absorbed also family and social reservations about 'the dole'.

Fourthly, there is the as yet unassessed influence of the availability of part-time jobs for full-time school students. Indications are that a very large proportion of part-time jobs is held by students still at school full-time (Stricker and Sheehan A41; O'Neil and Bosio B101; Praetz 4).

Fifthly, there are the unpredictable and often contrary effects of the multitude of government financial assistance schemes for young people.

It has, however, been now recognised that financial assistance to young people has developed over the years on an ad hoc basis into a conglomeration of schemes and allowances many of which have conflicting and sometimes unintended consequences for the choice between education and workforce participation (Newsletter, February 1983, p.34-36). In 1983, for the first time, a serious attempt has been made to review the tangled network of financial arrangements/conditions/allowances/benefits so as to provide an informed basis for rationalisation and consideration of policy. The first outcomes of this study are to be seen in Chapter 5 of the DEYA report¹ and in the recent publication, Income Support for Young People⁵ (see also Newsletter, August 1983, p.48-60).

. The attractions of having a job: Every survey of the views of young people on education and work emphasises the importance attached by them to simply having a job; and this is not necessarily linked to any strong dislike of schooling, though the attractions of a job - any job - are certainly strongly felt by those who are 'fed up' with school. However, for most students, a job signifies not only some degree of financial independence, but also an entry to the status and responsibilities of adulthood and to the opportunity to be treated as an individual (Connell et al., B99; Markham et al., B120; Power B89). Where continuing education seems to offer fewer rewards than previously, the attractions of an immediate job are increased, and many academically able students may be induced to seize employment opportunities as they offer. This factor has been identified as accounting in part at least for the decline in male retention beyond Year 10 which occurred during the 1970s (CTEC 83/AB: 27; Connell B99; Karmel A3). However, the latest BLMR report (84/AB: 19) queries the effect of this consideration, saying that 'while this might be true in particular cases, no evidence is available to suggest that this behaviour has had a significant aggregate impact on labour force and educational participation' (p.27).

. The availability of apprenticeships and trade training: It has become clearly recognised - even notorious - that apprenticeships (and consequently serious trade training) have been overwhelmingly the preserve of young males (Stoessiger B42; DEYA report P.134). Their availability has been assessed as an important factor influencing school retention rates. Apprenticeships

have become increasingly popular during the last decade, and sought after by a wide range of young people, including high achievers in education who might in earlier times have continued their education to tertiary levels (Markham and Reeders B120; CTEC 83/AB: 27). This has been ascribed partly to the increase in apprenticeships which occurred as a result of federal programs of encouragement such as the Commonwealth Rebate for Apprentice Full-time Training (CRAFT) (BLMR 84/AB: 19) and partly to expectations of trade training as an avenue to employment (Markham and Reeders B120). The availability of apprenticeships has been seen as another factor reducing school retention rates for males during the 1970s; equally the lack of apprenticeships for females meant that they also lacked the inducements and opportunities to leave school early.

More recently there has been a decline in the availability of apprenticeships and this is regarded as contributing to rising retention rates for males in schools during the last two years. Ford (83/AB: 7) comments that 'the estimates are that the apprenticeship intake will decline 20 per cent next year and thousands of young apprentices continue to lose their jobs and therefore their opportunity to complete their basic training' (p.6.). The decline itself is ascribed to the fact that most apprenticeships are in industries affected by technological change and therefore of declining significance as employers and trainers of employees (ASTEC report 84/AB: 3; BLMR 84/AB: 19). Questions of the provision and organisation of trade training therefore assume a new urgency. Arguing for the better development by Australia of its human resources, Ford (84/AB: 5) urges the

... need in Australia to expand the apprenticeship type learning opportunities to develop new skills, new career paths and improve the learning opportunities of previously neglected groups. For example, there is a need to develop appropriately multi-skilled people who will be employed in the emerging high-technology offices. Youth could be skilled in a range of activities, i.e. word processing, data processing, basic programming, and office administration. This would provide them with opportunities for flexible career paths. This is preferable to the present tendency to lock young people, particularly young girls, into narrow machine-based office occupations. Advertisements for word-processing operators usually indicate a requirement for training in a particular system. This drastically limits career and promotion opportunities and potentially places more women among the number of victims of tenosynovitis' (p.13).

An overview of the apprenticeship system and the issues relating to trade training is included in the DEYA report¹ (p.131-144).

. The levels of youth unemployment: Youth unemployment can have contrary effects on levels of school retention and entry to the workforce. On the one hand, as already discussed, it can act to persuade young people to leave school and take jobs as they offer; on the other, it can deter them from leaving schooling before they acquire the educational qualifications which may make them more attractive to employers. A third effect arises from unsuccessful job-seeking and some experience of unemployment both of

which may influence young people to return to school. Stricker and Sheehan (A41) estimate that 'the return to school phenomenon is of substantial proportions' (p.187). Sweet (B3/AB: 18) questions the validity of the Stricker and Sheehan estimates and the BLNR report (84/AB: 19) also sees this as being a very small factor in school retention rates and fluctuations. However, other survey type research seems to indicate that 'unintended stayers' are fairly numerous. Stoessiger, reporting on studies of country leavers in three States (B42) notes that in the Queensland sample, for example, there were 61 intending stayers compared with 230 actual leavers (p.42). He comments:

From these studies a disturbing pattern emerges. Considerable numbers of students leave school at the end of Year 10 in the hope of getting a job. When they are unsuccessful they return to school in order to improve their results, or more commonly just to bide time until a job comes up. Generally their parents actively encourage them to return to school. Few are genuinely interested in completing high school, the majority being eager to leave if by chance they are offered a job.

The inescapable conclusion is that a large number of unintended stayers are but latent unemployed youth (p.43).

In South Australia, O'Neil et al.⁶ came to similar conclusions, reporting 50 per cent of young people who had intended to leave school in fact returning after experiencing difficulties in finding jobs. Of these some 32 per cent at school in May 1981

... indicated they would leave school if first able to secure employment. Given this expressed desire of young people, the question of the relevance of upper secondary curricula and efforts to retain young people in school via structural changes in the nature of schooling are of critical and urgent importance. On the basis of this data, it could be assumed that a general improvement in the labour market would induce school leaving and possibly leave youth unemployment rates hovering around their existing level (p.25-26).

Education Choices and Occupational Outcomes

Miller (B24), in an analysis of the influence of education and migration on unemployment rates, based on 1976 Census figures, states that 'school leaving age is the most important variable affecting teenage unemployment', though the effects differ between Australian born and migrants (p.36). Metropolitan teenage males with a school leaving age of 13 years can expect an unemployment rate 29.4 per cent higher than can a 17 year old male school leaver. For females, the difference is 34 percentage points (p.9). Gruen (A48) amplifies Miller's statistical conclusions, indicating that 'the unemployment rate of 15-19 year males leaving school aged 17 years was 7.2 per cent; the unemployment rate of a group similar in all respects - except that they left school at 14 years - was 26 per cent' (p.13). The disadvantage of the early school leaver persists into older age groups (Miller, B24, p.18-19).

Similar overall results have been found by Williams *et al.* (Annotated Bibliography, A25) in their ongoing study of school students:

Each extra year of schooling completed increases one's likelihood of having attempted or having plans to undertake further education. Each additional year of schooling decreases by one month the time it takes to find a job after leaving school (-1.08), other things equal, decreases the probability of having ever been unemployed (-0.14), and decreases total unemployment by one and three-quarter months, on the average (-1.74). Each additional year spent in school is worth, *ceteris paribus*, 12 additional points of current occupational status and 10 points of expected status. In short, each extra year that early school leavers spend in school increases their chances of finding a job quickly and increases the status of their job while at the same time reducing the likelihood and length of unemployment (p.95).

Gregory and Stricker (A25) also comment that 'the unemployment rate of those not at school and in the labour force declines with age - from 25 per cent of 15 year olds to 13 per cent of 18 and 19 year olds' (p.1.20).

Gruen (A48) concludes:

But the main reason why later school leavers do so much better in the employment stakes may not be that they are so much better equipped by the schools - but because education acts as a screening device. We know that those who leave school early tend to be the lowest achievers (e.g. in terms of numeracy, literacy and word knowledge) and the least motivated. It is perhaps not surprising that these are also the least employable and that employers prefer keener and abler youths - when they can exercise a choice (p.13).

Drawing on some as yet unpublished information from the longitudinal study by Williams *et al.* (mentioned above; see also B102), the CTEC report (83/AB: 27) provides some further insights into the occupational outcomes as indicated by the experiences of the older groups in the national sample.

Some of the outcomes for those students in the lowest education achievement quartile can be contrasted with those for students in the highest achievement quartile:

. At age 18, still in full-time education:

Low: 11.7 per cent males; 9.3 per cent females
High: 48.0 per cent males; 45.8 per cent females

. In full-time labour force (1980) and unemployed

Low: 14.0 per cent (20.3 per cent females)
High: 4.1 " " (4.9 per cent females)

. At age 18, in full-time employment and low skill jobs

Low: 42.6 per cent

High: 16.6 per cent (which does not include those remaining full-time students)

. In neither full-time education nor full-time employment

Low: 27.6 per cent (17.8 per cent males; 37.2 per cent females)

High: 11.3 per cent (8.6 per cent males; 14.1 per cent females) (p.48-50).

In its analysis of the information, the CTEC report also indicates:

Apprenticeship emerges as a significant destination for young males in all achievement quartiles: by age 19, more than 35 per cent of males in Q1, Q2 and Q3 had been (or were still) apprentices, and even in the top quartile, more than 20 per cent of males had entered an apprenticeship.

Closely related is the fact that TAFE institutions, while drawing most of their students from the middle-achievement quartiles, are attracting significant numbers also from the quartiles at either extreme. Some 20 per cent of all TAFE students had come from the top achievement quartile, and 28 per cent had completed Year 12.

While confirming the high level of employment mobility among young people, and particularly males, the ACER data reveal also a strong relationship between mobility patterns and the nature of employment held. Fewer than half of those persons employed full-time in semi-skilled or unskilled jobs at age 18 were still in the same employment one year later. This group was also much more likely than the group in more skilled employment to be either unemployed at age 19 or to have withdrawn altogether from the labour force (p.49)

The differences in occupational outcomes are likely to be exacerbated in the future by the influence of technological change on the nature and patterns of work. The report of the Technological Change Committee of the Australian Science and Technology Council (ASTEC) 84/AB: 3) notes the decline in unskilled jobs, the trend towards homogenisation of work and an increasing polarisation of skill levels (Chapter 7). It advances as an important consideration that 'the use of advanced technology requires workers with appropriate skills and a basic understanding of science and technology which will enable them to adapt readily to new ideas and methods' (p.130). More emphatically and outspokenly, Ford, in a number of his papers, sees a long-term decline in the employment opportunities for the undereducated, undertrained, underexperienced and unskilled. He asks:

Where are young Australians going to find employment in the future? In the 1980s more young people will enter the Australian labour market than in any past decade. In this respect we are significantly different from most other comparable O.E.C.D. countries. If our young people are not allowed to share in the opportunities and rewards of employment then we will further reduce the levels of skills and vitality in this nation (84/AB: 7, p.7).

The Patterns of Employment: Full-time and Part-time Work

As discussed in the Newsletter of November 1983, the last fifteen years have seen a marked decline in the availability of full-time employment, paralleled by a growth in part-time employment (p.65-67). These trends have particularly affected young people. Stricker and Sheehan (A41) comment that 'there are virtually two distinct teenage labour markets, one mainly providing small amounts of spare-time employment and the other dealing with full-time work and the establishment of life-time working patterns by young people, and characterised by very high rates of recorded unemployment' (p.175).

The BLMR Report (84/AB: 19) shows that

Teenage full-time employment-population ratios have declined substantially since 1966 and this suggests the existence of a long-run trend. The teenage male ratio fell by almost 20 percentage points, from over 61 to 42 per cent, and the teenage female ratio fell by 25 percentage points, from 57 to 32 per cent. On the other hand teenage part-time ratios have risen, generally to a greater extent than those for adults, but these rises have only partially offset the sharp declines in teenage full-time ratios (p.8).

The CTEC Report (83/AB: 27) puts the trends in terms of numbers:

The number of 15-19 year-olds holding full-time jobs in Australia has fallen by more than 100,000 in the past 15 years, from 615,000 in 1966 to about 507,000 in 1981. The teenage population has grown by more than 230,000 over the same period, with the result that the proportion of young people in full-time work has fallen from 59.2 per cent in 1966 to only 40.0 per cent in 1981 (p.21).

It will come as no surprise to find that :

This fall in full-time employment has been considerably sharper for females than for males. In August 1966 some 61.3 per cent of teenage males and 57.1 per cent of teenage females held full-time jobs; by August 1981 these proportions had fallen to 45.3 per cent for males and to only 34.5 per cent for females. During the past

eight years of generally sluggish economic growth and high unemployment, the number of male teenagers holding full-time jobs has varied only fairly slightly (from 298,000 in 1973 to a low of 275,200 in 1978, reversing to 293,100 in 1981); throughout this period, moreover, teenage males have held a fairly constant share (nearly 8 per cent) of total full-time employment for males in the labour force. Full-time jobs for female teenagers, by contrast, have continued to decline quite sharply, both in absolute terms (from 259,900 in 1973 to 213,800 in 1981) and as a proportion of all full-time employment for females (from 18.6 per cent in 1973 to 14.4 per cent in 1981) (CTEC 83/AB: 27, p.21).

The CTEC Report goes on to mention that

... a major explanation for this difference in youth employment trends between the sexes lies in the strength of the apprenticeship system during the 1970s and the continued predominance of males within apprenticeship (p.21).

The BLMR report (84/AB: 19) estimates that 'about 80 per cent of male and 70 per cent of female employed teenagers currently work on a full-time basis, compared with 95 per cent of both sexes who worked full-time in the mid-1960s (p.8).

The BLMR report (84/AB: 19) identifies a decline in public sector employment opportunities for teenagers as an important factor reducing demand for teenage labour - and presumably full-time employment. It notes that 'public sector employment increased by 29 per cent between 1971 and 1981 (compared with private sector employment growth of only 8 per cent) and currently accounts for about 30 per cent of total employment. However, there is evidence that 15-20 year olds have not only failed to share in the growth of public sector employment, but experienced a substantial decline' (p.23).

The report continues:

Male and female 15-20 year-olds were the only groups estimated to have experienced large decreases (17 per cent and 11 per cent respectively) in public sector employment over the period. In contrast, it was estimated that male and female mature adults, and 21-24 year-old females, experienced large increases. These estimates are broadly consistent with the recent trends in APS employment noted above.

If public sector employment of 15-20 year-olds had grown at the same rate as total public sector employment, it is estimated that their public sector employment in 1981 would have been about 70,000 higher than it actually was (p.24).

As full-time employment for teenagers has fallen, part-time employment has increased. The share of part-time jobs held by teenagers increased from 7.7 per cent in 1966 to 10.7 per cent in 1974 and to 14 per cent in 1980 (Stricker and Sheehan A41; see also Gregory and Stricker A25, 1.10). The BLMR report (84/AB: 19) notes that

... although the full-time employment of teenagers declined throughout the period, reflecting increases in school retention rates, the decline was offset - although only partially in the case of females - by the substantial growth in their part-time employment (p.8).

Sweet, in a paper entitled The Teenage Labour Market: Trends and Projects (A18a), sums up the developments:

Although public debate on part-time work in Australia has concentrated on adults, principally upon married female adults, part-time work among teenagers has been growing at twice the rate of part-time work among adults since the beginning of the 1970s. One of the most important changes that occurred in teenage employment patterns in Australia during the 1970s was a shift in the balance between full- and part-time employment. At the beginning of the decade less than a tenth of all jobs held by teenagers were part-time jobs. By the end of the decade more than one in five of all jobs held by teenagers were part-time jobs. This trend has affected girls more than boys. In 1970 roughly equal proportions of employed teenage males and females could be found in part-time jobs. By August 1980 27 per cent of employed teenage girls - more than a quarter - were in part-time employment, compared to 17.8 per cent of employed teenage boys (p.2).

In the last two years, 'teenage males and females have seen reductions in full-time employment of 69,300 and 30,900 respectively and increases in part-time employment of 2,200 for males and 23,100 for females' (DEYA, p.67).

The patterns of teenage employment have, in the last decade or so, been complicated by the fact that the relationship between school and labour force participation for teenagers can no longer be described in terms of 'either/or'. A significant development has been the involvement of full-time school students in part-time work. Stricker and Sheehan (A41) estimated that 'two-thirds of teenagers who work part-time or seek part-time work are full-time school students and most of the growth in the teenage part-time labour force has been among school students' (p.175).

Between August 1971 and August 1979 the number of persons aged 15 to 19 years who were both at school and working part-time increased four-fold while the rise for those not at school was only 40 per cent. The differential is particularly striking numerically during the recession years - part-time employment among school students increased by 47,000 or 143 per cent between August 1974 and August 1979 while part-time employment among teenagers not at school increased by only 2,000 or 4 per cent (A41, p.185).

Commenting on these developments, the BLMR report (84/AB: 19) estimates:

The proportion of full-time teenage students (school and other) who were in the labour force rose from 5 per cent in 1971 to 27 per cent in 1981, with most of the increased numbers apparently going into part-time work. Full-time students constituted almost 75 per cent of the teenage part-time labour force in 1981 ... School students accounted for more than three-quarters of all students engaged in part-time work in 1981, and between 1971 and 1981 they increased their share of total teenage part-time jobs from 28 per cent to 58 per cent. In this period they contributed 71 per cent of the total increase in part-time teenage employment. This reflected a sharp rise in the proportion of teenage school students working part-time, from 4 per cent in 1971 to 17 per cent in 1981 (p.8).

[see also CTEC 83/AB: 27; Sweet A18]

The DEYA report¹ concludes that 'thus the trend to a greater share of the teenage employment being part-time is simultaneously a shrinking in the number of jobs available to those teenagers out of education' (p.74).

Little in the way of in-depth research into the participation of teenagers, including school students, in part-time work has come to the Clearinghouse. The study by O'Neil and Bosio (Part 1, B101; Part 2⁴) throws some light on the developments. It is based on a survey of 2,800 school students in Years 10-12 in Adelaide and of 400 similar students in country centres. It confirms the high proportion of such students in the workforce: 29.1 per cent were working in October 1980 and 72 per cent of them were aged 15-16 years.

Further information on teenage and school student part-time work may be available in the future from the national longitudinal study by Williams et al. (B102); from two studies currently being undertaken by the Victorian Institute of Secondary Education (VISE) (83/AB: 112, 113) and from studies, also in Victoria, by Markham and Reeders (83/AB: 127, 128).

Where are the Jobs?

A 1981 report by the Bureau of Industry Economics (A5) noted that in the first half of the 1970s: 'Among males, youths are far more likely to be in tradesmen, production process worker and labourer occupations and sales occupations than either young adults or adults. Male youths are much less likely to be in professional or technical, administrative or managerial or clerical occupations or in transport and communication occupations than are older males' (p.86). Young females in the same period were more likely to be in sales occupations than were older women. The Report concludes that 'youths are more concentrated into a narrow range of occupations than are young adults or adults' (p.138).

Even greater differences were apparent when more disaggregated occupations were considered, showing that 'youths and young adults gain entry to only a very limited range of occupations' (p.91). In 1971, 62.9 per cent of male youths worked in only six minor occupation groups: mechanics and metal machinists, clerical, tradesmen and labourers, shopkeepers and sales assistants, electricians and electrical workers, carpenters and related workers. By 1976, the concentration was 64.3 per cent. For females, the degree of occupational concentration is even more marked. 'In 1976, 78.8 per cent of female youths worked in only six minor occupation groups: clerical workers, shopkeepers and sales assistants, stenographers and typists, nurses, book-keepers and cashiers, hairdressing and beautician occupations' (p.91-94). The Report goes on to point out that

Demographic labour market segmentation implies that given changes in industry structure and occupation mix will have differential effects on the various demographic groups in the labour market (p.138)

and continues:

Future changes, both in industry structure and in occupation mix, are likely to affect males and females, and youths and adults in different ways. Youth of both sexes are heavily concentrated in sales occupations which may be affected in the near future by changes in production technology in the retailing industry. Women are heavily concentrated in clerical occupations, and it has been suggested that micro-electronic processing developments will therefore have a particularly severe effect on the female workforce (p.138).

Paterson and Mackay (83/AB: 40) see the industrial structures of the youth labour market as broadly reflecting those of the adult market. They comment that in 1981

... the majority of male youth (52 per cent) employed full-time were concentrated in just two industries: manufacturing, and wholesale and retail trade. Adult males were more evenly spread across industries, although manufacturing and wholesale and retail trade still accounted for 42 per cent of full-time male employees. Over 80 per cent of young females employed full-time were located in four industries: wholesale and retail trade, finance, community services and manufacturing. A similar proportion of adult females were also employed in these four industries. It can be concluded that the industry structures of youth and adult employment are broadly similar (p.4-19).

However, in part-time employment the structures are markedly different:

The wholesale and retail trade industry accounted for almost half of youth part-time employment of both sexes. The next largest employer of part-time youth labour was the entertainment, recreation, restaurants, hotels and personal services industry: it employed 16 per cent of males and 23 per cent of females. In

contrast, adult part-time employment was somewhat more evenly spread across industries. The largest single employer was community services, which accounted for 31 per cent of adult male part-time employment, and 38 per cent of adult females (Paterson and Mackay 83/AB: 40, 4.19).

Looking at the age and sex segmentation of the labour market and trends between 1971 and 1981, the DEYA report¹ makes the points that 'there were declines in total full-time employment in five of the 10 industries with high ratios for males, but in only two of those were there declines in young male employment (construction and agriculture). For female youth there were declines in both industries in which total employment fell - finance and investment and retail trade' (p.87). Thus young females 'are not fully sharing in the expansion of full-time employment in the growing service industries. In eight of the ten male youth intensive industries young males increased their share of total full-time employment. Thus they have tended to increase their share of full-time employment in those industries which are in relative and/or absolute decline' (DEYA report p.87). This result, notes the BLMR report (84/AB: 19), 'could reflect the relatively high growth in the number of apprentices in training - 28 per cent or 31,600 between 1971 and 1981' (p.21).

The ASTEC report (84/AB: 3) discusses the way in which technology can reduce employment (Chapter 6). 'Jobless growth' (that is a growth in output without a corresponding increase in the number of jobs) has occurred or is expected in a range of industries such as computers, printing, wholesale and retail trades, telecommunications and, to some extent, banking. Sweet (A18a) expands on the restructuring of the organisation of work taking place in the retail and service industries - 'a restructuring which has used many of the techniques for increasing productivity that have traditionally been the province of manufacturing industry: economies of scale, specialisation and division of labour, product standardisation and more effective scheduling of labour in relation to demand. Supermarkets as a substitute for strip retailing, self-service displays, out of hours shelf restocking, standardised take-away meals, pre-packaging of goods and restrictions of the range of brands and sizes stocked are examples. The consequent reduction in the amount of skill and experience required for the distribution of goods and services at the point of sale makes it possible to hire cheap, inexperienced, minimally trained labour for a few hours a day instead of more expensive, experienced, skilled and trained full-time labour' (p.4-5).

A more detailed analysis is contained in Sweet's paper, An Analysis of Trends in the Teenage Labour Market in NSW 1971-1976 (A18); and in his paper in this issue of the Bulletin, Sweet indicates the need for data and analysis of data which will throw light on variations between States, regions and local areas in employment patterns and trends. There would seem to be a complementary need for on-the-ground research also into these aspects of the teenage labour market.

What Kind of Jobs?

As a consequence of the growth in part-time employment and the employment policies attendant on the restructuring of industry -

Most of the part-time jobs held by teenagers are very brief - they last on average from 7 to 10 hours per week - and most of them are not permanent, being casual, seasonal or temporary. They pay very poorly at the rate of \$2 to \$3 per hour, and as a result they cannot pretend to pay a living wage. At best they are pocket money jobs. Most of the jobs entail almost no training and they are at a very low skill level, providing no access to career paths. Teenagers holding these jobs work as packers, wrappers, check-out operators, cleaners, shop assistants, short-order cooks, counter-hands and labourers and most of the jobs are found in the retail and service industries.

More than a fifth of teenage workers are now at best on the margins of the workforce. They are in poorly paid, casual, brief, low skilled dead-end jobs, and these are not the secure, well paid, permanent, skilled jobs with career prospects that career education and transition policies tend to concentrate upon (Sweet, The Teenage Labour Market. Trends and Prospects A18a, p.3-4).

Stricker and Sheehan (A41) also comment:

The work obtained by school students is predominantly in wholesale and retail trade and only for a small number of hours per week - in August 1978 wholesale and retail trade provided 71 per cent of this employment and the average number of hours worked per week was 7.2 hours - while teenagers studying at tertiary institutions must account for much of the remainder of teenage part-time employment (p.175).

A similar picture emerges from the O'Neil and Bosio survey of school students at work (B101 and Part 2).⁴ Part 2 of this survey confirms 'the concentration of young people in the wholesale and retail trades as casual, temporary, marginal employees' (p.27). 'Young people are concentrated in non-promotional positions where their employment is insecure, devoid of influence (or power) and heavily casualised' (p.27). The report quotes a forthcoming publication by Macintosh and Rawlinson⁵ on the way teenagers see these jobs:

- . young workers experience only moderate communication with their workmates
- . management is seen to be difficult to approach
- . perceptions of future advancement and promotion are negative
- . hours in the day at work 'drag'
- . hardly ever any pride in a 'job being special'
- . few opportunities to use skills
- . hardly ever any long hours of work
- . little exercise of freedom to control one's job

- . skills do not improve with the length of the job
- . little enjoyment out of the work performed
- . one's efforts are seldom appreciated by superiors
- . seldom any variety in the job. (p.28).

The report also provides insights into working hours and earnings, showing that

... over 60 per cent of students worked 8 hours or less per week, with this work activity being undertaken on two days of the week (e.g. Thursday evening, Saturday morning, Friday evenings, Saturday morning). The working pattern of school students is clearly influenced by laws relating to shopping hours (p.29).

The following Table 6.6 of the report shows how much part-time workers earn in the week:

<u>Total Earnings Last Week</u>		
	<u>Responses</u>	<u>%</u>
Without Pay	18	5.2
Under \$5	31	9.0
\$6.00 to \$15.00	92	26.7
\$16.00 to \$25.00	96	27.0
\$26.00 to \$35.00	58	16.8
\$36.00 to \$45.00	19	5.5
\$46.00 to \$55.00	18	5.2
\$56.00 to \$65.00	6	1.7
Over \$65.00	6	1.7
No answer	1	0.3
Total	345	100.0

(p.30)

REFERENCES

(Abstracts will be made of these publications)

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SOME LABOUR MARKET ASPECTS OF YOUTH POLICY*

by Richard Sweet**

Towards PEP (Participation and Equity Program)

A recent paper by Shears and Matthews (1983) illustrates ways in which national youth policies can be framed to respond to a broad range of adolescents' personal, developmental and economic needs. However within Australia, current debate on youth policy is locked almost exclusively into a narrower labour market and educational context. Within these narrower boundaries debate continues to focus on appropriate responses to what is perceived as the major youth labour market problem - unemployment.

At the moment, and indeed ever since the mid-1970s, the distribution of funds between education and the labour market strongly favours labour market responses to unemployment among youth. In 1981-82, for instance, every dollar allocated to education programs was matched by six dollars for labour market programs such as SYETP and CRAFT (Freeland, 1983). Despite its rhetoric on education's role in producing youth unemployment, the reality of the Fraser Government's response indicated that it saw the labour market as the most appropriate place to tackle a labour market problem.

Notwithstanding the Fraser Government's Wage Pause Program and the current Government's Community Employment Program there are grounds for believing that the policy debate, if not as yet the distribution of funds, is swinging around to a view that educational programs must take precedence as a long term response.

There are several reasons for this, not the least of which is a growing recognition in policy circles that a high level of unemployment among youth is not a temporary phenomenon for which short term solutions are appropriate, but a continuing fact of life for the foreseeable future. Over and above this the experience of 1983, in which initial apprenticeship intakes have nearly halved despite the continued wage subsidies offered by CRAFT, suggests that attempts to stimulate demand for youth are no buffer against downturns in the economic cycle. Similarly evaluations of wage subsidy programs designed to give short-term work experience as a way of improving youth's competitiveness point to consequent substitutions between youth and adult workers which are too small to have any major long-term impact upon youth's aggregate labour market position (Stretton, 1982; Smith, 1983).

Within the education sector initial responses to youth unemployment - the Education Program for Unemployed Youth and the School to Work Transition Program - seemed to be based upon the assumption that improving the quality of the supply of youth labour (through attempting to remedy the presumed educational, personal or training deficiencies of those 'at risk') was the most appropriate way of changing the labour market status of youth as a group. The limited success of such programs has been documented in a number

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of studies - Hubbert (1980), Harrison and O'Neill (1983) and Barton and Rustomji (1983) are instances. The recent expression by a body as influential as the Commonwealth Tertiary Education Commission (1982) of the view that changing the competitive position of selected groups will achieve little indicates that the basic rationale for existing programs is not accepted by all sections of the national educational bureaucracy.

Within a labour market context the main significance of the new Participation and Equity Program is its recognition that in the long term a solution to youth's labour market problem lies not in stimulating demand for youth or in improving the quality of labour supply, but in reducing the supply of youth labour, and doing this by achieving a permanent increase in educational participation rates.

Research to Date

Early Australian responses to rising unemployment seemed based upon little more than a crude analysis of unemployment rates by age and by school leaving age. The limited nature of our understanding of the youth labour market in the mid-1970s can be gathered from the superficiality of the labour market analyses contained in the first major collection of papers on youth unemployment to appear after 1975 (Henderson, 1977). In recent years, and in particular since 1979, there have been several significant attempts to increase our understanding of the youth labour market. It must be conceded that some of these, such as Gregory and Duncan's (1980) argument that teenage unemployment could be attributed to atypical labour supply behaviour linked to coincidental increases in unemployment benefits, have been more misleading than helpful. (Subsequent analysis by Merrilees (1981) failed to support the unemployment benefits hypothesis and a paper by Gregory and Foster (1981) argues that teenagers' relatively high unemployment rates are due not to their leaving school in excess numbers but to their relatively greater tendency to leave or lose jobs.)

Nevertheless there are important areas of ignorance which have been filled in in recent years. The rise of the teenage part-time labour market has by now been well documented despite having been obscured during most of the 1970s. The nature, and to a lesser extent origins, of this labour market have been outlined in papers such as Sweet (1980), Paterson and Mackay (1982b) and Gregory and Stricker (1981), and as a result the basic segmentation of the youth labour market is now much better appreciated than it was at the time of Karmel's (1979) Radford Memorial Lecture. We know that these jobs are generally brief, deskilled, poorly paid, seasonal and casual and that they are totally different from the secure and skilled permanent part-time jobs available to school leavers under the German dual system (OECD, 1981). For policy purposes their substantial confinement to school students combined with their casual deskilled nature argues against their being combined in a meaningful way with part-time post-school education as a new option in the transition from school.

The substantial long-term decline in full-time employment has also by now been made explicit, and there would be few educational policy-makers who are not aware of the need to disaggregate teenage employment into separate part- and full-time components. We know a little about why full-time employment among teenagers has fallen. Certainly the previous supply-side orthodoxy which argued that the long-term trend was due to students voluntarily remaining longer at school (Williams, 1979; Gregory and Duncan, (1980) has been balanced by an awareness of the role in reducing employment

of demand factors of a structural, institutional and technological nature (Sweet, 1983a; Merrilees, 1980). *Learning and Earning's* advocacy of supply reduction policies in the face of the improbability of increased demand seems a translation of this recognition into policy terms (Commonwealth Tertiary Education Commission, 1982).

The concentration of employment declines in the public sector (Paterson and Mackay, 1982a) and in white collar work and many categories of skilled work (Sweet, 1983a) has been documented. Linked to these declines has been a disproportionate deterioration in teenage girls' labour market position, a deterioration which appears in a number of labour market indices (Sweet, 1982a). The role of apprenticeship in sustaining relative demand for teenage boys during the 1970s is by now well appreciated (Merrilees, 1983), even if there are still gaps in our understanding of the causes of this sustained demand. Despite the rhetoric which this sexual disparity has generated, Freeland's (1983) recent expenditure analysis makes it clear that a translation of this rhetoric into expenditure on those most at risk in the labour market has not occurred.

Work on labour market flows has provided a valuable additional dimension to our understanding of the operation of the teenage labour market (Paterson, 1980; Gregory and Foster, 1981; Gregory and Stricker, 1981; Sheehan and Foster, 1981). It has shown for example that whereas for a small group of teenagers unemployment is a long-term phenomenon, for most it is relatively brief, with youth who are unemployed being no less likely than unemployed adults to experience difficulty in finding work once unemployed. The finding that teenage girls are more likely than other groups to leave the labour force once unemployed is a further valuable result from flows analysis, and the existence of large numbers of teenage girls with no labour force or educational status reinforces the argument for using an index to measure those at risk in the transition from school which is more comprehensive than the unemployment rate (Sweet, 1983b).

Areas for Investigation

(i) Labour Market Segmentation

Nevertheless substantial areas of ignorance remain. Although a switch to supply reduction policies makes improved understanding of labour market segmentation and of substitutions between teenagers and adults and between teenagers and those in their early twenties less pressing, the ongoing funding momentum of existing programs such as SYETP still argues for more research of this nature. The recent Bureau of Labour Market Research (1983) report on youth wages makes some contribution, but it remains important to explore issues such as the extent to which substitutions have occurred between school leavers and the rapidly growing number of graduates in their early twenties (Fisher, 1982) in areas such as government administration where decline in teenage employment has been substantial. In a related manner there needs to be better investigation of the extent to which the increased labour force participation of women in their early twenties, rather than a return to the labour force of older married women, has been a factor in teenage girls' labour market difficulties.

(ii) Local Labour Markets

But if we do switch to policies which emphasise reducing labour supply through increased educational participation, what gaps are there in our understanding of the youth labour market and its interactions with education?

For purposes of program delivery the paucity of data at a regional or local level is one of the most obvious. The decision earlier this year to resume issuing quarterly Commonwealth Employment Service data is a step in the right direction. On a regional basis this information can give an estimate of the extent to which supply needs to be reduced, but it is of little use in answering questions about local patterns or trends in employment. This data is particularly important for many TAFE programs. Census local area data is of limited value for this purpose, as generally it does not disaggregate employment by age, and one lesson that has been provided by recent analyses of the youth labour market is that youth and adult employment trends can often move in opposite directions (Sweet, 1983a).

At a State level this disaggregation problem disappears, with a multitude of census tables cross-classified by age being available. Yet this data source has scarcely been tapped, with our knowledge of State level differences in employment trends for youth being almost non-existent. That it is a potentially rich field is suggested by a recent study of the labour market for typists (Sweet, 1983c) which reveals substantial inter-State differences in trends in demand during the 1970s.

However perhaps even more fundamental for a policy of increasing educational participation is that we have virtually no idea at a regional level about where the declines in school participation in the 1970s occurred. Did the fall in school participation which alarmed policy-makers occur in working class areas, in middle class areas or both? Although on both ideological and equity grounds there is a case for concentrating attempts to increase participation in areas where participation has traditionally been low, an equally sound case could be made for attempting to bring participation rates back to previous levels in areas where once they were high. An analysis by Teese (1983) of retention trends in metropolitan Melbourne claims that retention rate declines were sharpest in working class areas, but this conclusion does not seem well supported by the graphs presented and no original data that would allow a more rigorous statistical test are provided by the author.

Some light could be shed on this question in a general sense if we knew more about trends in the social composition of apprentices in the 1970s. Was the decline in school participation among sixteen and seventeen year old males, a decline which increased apprenticeship opportunities contributed to in a major way, caused by more working class boys entering the trades, or by middle class boys using the trades to jump the queue in the face of high unemployment and a declining return for graduate qualifications?

(iii) Migrant Youth

Adolescents who are migrants or who are the children of migrants are among the groups most frequently included in discussions of educational disadvantage. The field of migrant, multicultural or ethnic education has of course by now been well tilled. However, what happens to migrant students once they leave school and enter the labour market is an area about which almost nothing of value is known. Papers such as Gregory and Stricker (1981) contain some data on unemployment rates by age and age left school, and on average weekly earnings by school leaving age, for those born in Australia and those born overseas, but this distinction is too coarse to be of value for most practical purposes.

Miller's (1982b) analysis of the economic and labour market position of migrants contains some more detailed disaggregations by country or region of birth, but does not disaggregate by age. The problem of the most accessible data being too coarse to be of practical value, even at a national level, is replicated in ABS publications such as the monthly Labour Force survey. Even census data are of minimal value for most practical policy purposes, because available cross-classifications which allow labour market variables to be explored by age and birthplace, or by parental birthplace, are extremely limited in number in microfiche form. Much basic data is available at matrix tape level, but for all except specialised researchers with access to considerable computing skills, matrix tapes are as good as inaccessible.

The Australian Institute of Multicultural Affairs' current study of young migrants in the labour force will provide some useful information but results will not be available until at least mid-1984.

(iv) Fringe Youth

Although unemployment is the most widely used measure of the number of youth in difficulty in the transition from school, if we exclude those in either full-time work or full-time education, there are nearly as many teenagers left over who are not counted as unemployed as who are officially regarded by ABS as looking for work. For instance in July 1982 there were 96,100 post-school teenagers in this category compared with 98,000 in the official unemployed group (ABS, 1982).

In the main these missing thousands either survive on a combination of the dole and/or poorly paid casual part-time work, or have no educational or labour force status at all (Sweet, 1982b). We know almost nothing about them, other than the fact that roughly two-thirds are girls. We do not know whether this fringe group who have fallen into a statistical black hole are rural youth, live on outer urban fringes, or are surviving in inner city squats. Are they mostly the children of migrants? And how many exist on supporting parents' benefits, without building up work experience or training to give them a stake in the future? If we aim to develop equitable participation programs, this is an obvious group of school leavers for whom no formal provision exists. Obviously TAFE, as the major post-school provider, has an interest in finding out more about them.

(v) Explaining Participation

In addition to these areas of the youth labour market about which we know little, we know very little about the way in which labour market factors influence educational participation. Learning and Earning broke with the previous orthodoxy by venturing to suggest that labour demand factors had influenced participation rates since 1975, but its argument contained inconsistencies and was derived from no inferential statistical analysis other than a description of trends. Although there have been recent cross-sectional analyses of school participation within a labour market and economic framework by Burke (1982) and Miller (1982a), these shed little light on trends over time. Attempts that have been made to explain trends in school participation have generally been inconclusive, having foundered upon statistical complexities. (For example, see Merrilees (1981) and Bureau of Labour Market Research (1983).)

Nevertheless it is important to attempt to shed light on the question, for a policy of deliberately attempting to increase education participation presumably should be based upon a feeling for the extent to which additional government expenditure, over and above normal labour force factors, can influence school participation. Most school systems were unprepared for this year's sudden increase in secondary enrolments. Well before a dollar of PEP funds has been spent this increase, the monthly ABS Labour Force survey (Cat. No. 6203.0) suggests, is running at about 30,000 up on 1982. Few will fail to notice that this coincides exactly with the Federal Government's target of an increase of 30,000 over a three-year period which it outlined to this year's economic summit (Department of Education and Youth Affairs, 1983).

At present the Department of Education and Youth Affairs' enrolment projections are based upon a simple extrapolation of past trends. It could be useful for it to conduct an exercise in which the accuracy of simple extrapolations was tested against forecasts derived from the additional inclusion of labour market variables in prediction equations. On the basis of even a crude analysis of the relationship between labour market variables and retention trends (Sweet, 1983: p.32) it would have seemed clear from trends in full-time employment among teenagers late in 1982 that 1983 would produce a bumper crop of post-compulsory school enrolments.

If we do not know enough about what influences school participation rates, we know nothing at all about influences on TAFE participation. Cross-sectional analyses of school participation (Burke, 1982; Miller, 1982b) point to a positive correlation between family income and school enrolment rates. The greater proportion of working class enrolments in TAFE (Anderson and Verwoorn, 1983) makes it probable that this relationship does not hold as simply for TAFE. Even if we restrict attention to youth participation, the problem is fearsomely more complex than in the school sector, for TAFE participation cannot be measured as readily by a single figure as school participation can. The effect upon post-school participation in TAFE of factors such as socio-economic status, ethnicity and sex is likely to vary considerably according to whether we are looking at full-time technician enrolments, part-time trade enrolments, full-time basic or general education enrolments or part-time adult education enrolments.

The meaning of an increase in school participation is relatively straightforward, but what sort of increase in TAFE participation does PEP envisage? Presumably full-time, but in what sort of courses, and among which groups? A clearer understanding of the relationship between labour market and demographic variables and youth participation in TAFE areas as diverse as secretarial training, trade training, technician training and general education would seem an important underpinning for the policy.

Conclusion

The pressures which are put on policy-makers often force them to make immediate decisions in the absence of relevant facts. However even when the facts are available, there are good reasons for questioning the assumption that they will be translated readily into policy or into program expenditure. To date the record on the translation of labour market data into unemployment or transition from school policy reinforces this unease. Despite what crude figures on the age composition of unemployment or on unemployment durations by age tell us, most expenditure on unemployment programs has until

very recently continued to ignore adults, who constitute the majority of the unemployed and whose average duration of unemployment is almost twice that of teenagers. We have known for some time that girls have suffered disproportionately from recent labour market changes, and yet boys continue to receive the lion's share of labour market program expenditure. Despite a steady deskilling of teenagers' work by major retailers, TAFE authorities continue to offer transition courses in retail distribution which can only further lock youth into marginal labour force status.

So we cannot automatically assume that if we know more about local labour markets TAFE programs will be more appropriately targeted or that educational and labour market programs will be better co-ordinated. Similarly it should not be assumed that better knowledge of the hidden post-school fringe groups will automatically lead to resources being made available under PEP to locate and provide services for them.

Lack of use by policy-makers of labour market data could be attributed to ignorance of the facts, to knowledge combined with lack of appreciation of the implications, or to awareness combined with resistance. If goodwill, but perhaps not political reality, obliges us to discount the last possibility there remains an obligation for labour market researchers who wish to influence policy to ensure that the results of their research are both disseminated to policy-makers and written in a manner which makes their policy implications clear. Needless to say this process requires researchers to become aware of policy concerns just as much as it requires policy-makers to become aware of research.

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REVIEW PAPER NO. 11

FEDERAL POLICY RELATING TO SCHOOL
RETENTION IN AUSTRALIA

A Critical Discussion

by

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Federal Policy Relating to School Retention
in Australia*

BACKGROUND

The Hawke Federal Government has been quick to address itself to the issue of low school retention in Australia. It announced in the 1984 funding guidelines to the Commonwealth Schools Commission that it

... will establish a new Participation and Equity Program in 1984 to encourage young people over the school leaving age to participate in useful and fulfilling education and training activities in schools and TAFE. The program will be the centrepiece of the overall framework of youth policies that the Government is developing (Department of Education and Youth Affairs, 1983a: 3).

The first-listed point in the 'Schools' section of the Participation and Equity Program (PEP) guidelines is that

The Program will seek to achieve a significant increase in the participation of young people by reducing significantly the numbers of students who leave full-time education prematurely (Department of Education and Youth Affairs, 1983a: 15).

But how does the Federal Government intend to bring about a substantial increase in school retention? Two policy directions it seems to favour are labelled, for the purposes of this paper, school and attitudinal changes and youth allowances restructuring.

School and Attitudinal Changes

It is apparent that changes at the school level are to be sought through PEP. The 1984 funding guidelines to the Commonwealth Schools Commission state that

The new program will be directed towards bringing about wide-ranging changes in schools which will enable them to give all students, and especially those from a disadvantaged background, a rewarding, useful education through to the end of secondary schooling. The program will be directed particularly to secondary schools with

- * The author wishes to acknowledge that comments made by Dr Meredith Edwards, Mrs C. Blakers and Dr R.B. King influenced this paper and expresses appreciation to those persons. Comments by Dr Edwards about the practicalities of a single youth allowance being introduced in the short term were particularly influential.

low retention rates and will seek to foster more equal outcomes of schooling. Thus the new program will have the twin objectives of increasing participation in education and of introducing greater equity in our overall provision for young people (Department of Education and Youth Affairs, 1983a: 3).

The PEP guidelines go into some detail concerning school level changes and also mention attitudinal changes. They note that funds will be made available to stimulate changes with a view to meeting the needs of all students; particularly in school organisation, the curriculum, credentialling and assessment, teacher attitudes and skills, school-community relations and community attitudes to education (Department of Education and Youth Affairs, 1983a: 15).

Youth Allowances Restructuring

The general discussion of PEP in the 1984 funding guidelines to the Commonwealth Schools Commission gives some hint of a possible youth allowances restructuring in noting that the Department of Education and Youth Affairs will exercise

... a strong co-ordinating role to ensure that education, training, income support and employing policies are harmonized to the maximum extent (Department of Education and Youth Affairs, 1983a: 3).

A stronger hint comes from the Commonwealth Schools Commission's recommendation of 'Incentives and Disincentives in the Current Financial Support Systems for Secondary Students and their Families' (Recommendations for 1984, quoted in Commonwealth Schools Commission, 1983: 2) as an area for attention (see Commonwealth Schools Commission, 1983: 1-2).

Recent press accounts suggest that a restructuring of youth allowances is being considered by the Federal Government. One press account reported the Minister for Industry and Commerce, Senator Button as saying that

'I think in the longer term we have to move towards an abolition of the proliferation of youth allowances and unemployment benefits and so on which are applicable to young people.

'We have to try to get a sort of guaranteed income scheme for young people. It wouldn't be very high, but it would be across-the-board.

'And that income should be provided as long as they are engaged in some positive activity, whether it be education, apprentice training, community works employment or other projects of one kind or another.

'There are a whole range of activities that people could be involved in positively in this age group, while not participating in the traditional workforce' (The Weekend Australian, 27-28 August, 1983: 4).

Another press account, of a then forthcoming visit of an Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development team, noted that

The role of income-support-schemes in helping young people to stay at school is likely to be examined by a team from the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development ...

The Federal Minister for Education and Youth Affairs, Senator Susan Ryan, said that the team had been asked to

- . Review government policies and programme [sic] in education, training, employment and income support ...
- . Look at the role of income-support schemes as incentives to encourage young people to continue education and training ... (The West Australian, 6 September, 1983: 34).

Yet another press account reported the Minister for Social Security, Senator Grimes, as saying that

'We are seeing whether we can't do what most sensible countries have done - that is, replace the payments of the 16 various income support payments we have for young people, with one or two youth allowances' (The Weekend Australian, 17-18 September 1983: 1).

That press account also reported that

The Federal Government is considering moves for an increase in student allowances to at least the same level as the dole in an attempt to keep students at schools (The Weekend Australian, 17-18 September 1983: 1).

Finally, a press account about the Minister for Education and Youth Affairs, Senator Ryan, noted that

Senator Ryan says the Government also needs to study the economic reasons for children leaving school early.

Young high school students from poor families were being forced by economic circumstances to drop out of school to go on the dole.

The Government was looking at ways to reduce the gap between the youth dole and secondary school allowances to make staying on at school more attractive (The West Australian, 1 October 1983: 10).

While Secretary of the Department of Education and Youth Affairs, Dr Peter Wilenski discussed the topic of youth allowances in a paper presented at the 'Learning and Earning' Conference in Queensland, September 1983. In that paper Wilenski (1983:11) noted that the current allowances 'are inequitable' and 'provide perverse incentives as between education and unemployment'. He also noted the possible disincentive to continue at school embedded in the current allowances, writing that

As to disincentives, while the effect may not be severe, given the host of other factors operating to influence decisions about school leaving and continuation, nevertheless in a country with such low secondary retention rates, it is highly questionable whether higher levels of support should be provided to unemployed early school leavers in terms of youth unemployment benefit ... than to students from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds who elect to remain in, or to return to school (Wilenski, 1983: 13).

What shape might a youth allowances package resulting from a restructuring/rationalisation of current allowances take? A speculative outline of a youth allowances package, unconstrained by cost or political acceptability, is presented below.

An Unconstrained Youth Allowances Package (UYAP)

1. An UYAP would apply to a fairly wide age-range, probably 15 to 19 years of age.

Wilenski seems to stress the age range 15-19 in his discussion of three youth allowance models (see Wilenski, 1983: 17-23). Shears and Matthews (1983: 109) refer to the age range 15-18 in their recommendation concerning investigating a Youth Grant plus Youth Allowance. Ironmonger (1983: 3) writes of the age range 13-19 in his proposal for a universal youth allowance. Edwards (1983: 48) gives 15-19 as the age group on which her discussion of a youth allowance concentrates.

2. An UYAP would provide financial support through a limited number of allowances, rather than through the many currently in existence.

Shears and Matthews (1983: 109) refer to 'the bewildering variety of allowances' in their recommendation for an investigation of a Youth Grant plus Youth Allowance. Edwards and Dunlop (1983: 18-22) discuss the issue of the complexity of the existing provisions. Edwards writes that

It is generally agreed that reform is needed in the structure of youth allowances: there is complexity in the current structure and yet there appears no clear rationale to justify that complexity (1983: 48).

The Department of Education and Youth Affairs raised the following questions under the heading 'Complexity':

Does the variety of our forms of assistance tend to confuse young people and to blur the choices confronting them and their parents? Would a much simpler system, with only a few basic allowances, be conducive to more rational choices by recipients and more effective achievement of Government policy objectives? (1983b: xxx).

Senator Button's comments on abolishing 'the proliferation of youth allowances and unemployment benefits and so on' in favour of an across-the-board scheme, and Senator Grimes' comment on introducing 'one or two youth allowances' to replace '16 various income support payments' suggest Federal Government support for this point.

3. An UYAP would permit allowance recipients to engage in a broad range of activities, including post-compulsory secondary schooling.*

Previously quoted comments from Senator Button indicate that he sees as desirable a fairly non-restrictive approach to the activities in which youth allowance recipients might participate. Wilenski, in discussing his General Model youth allowance, also outlines a non-restrictive approach:

The most direct and general approach would be for a youth allowance to be paid to all young people aged 15-19 not in full-time employment to provide them with a financial base from which they can undergo further training or education or undertake a variety of personal initiatives outside the regular workforce (1983: 17).

Similarly, Ironmonger's proposal for a universal youth allowance takes a non-restrictive approach. Ironmonger writes that

The allowance should be available for everyone in this age group [13-19], whether at school, in other education or unemployment, but should be reduced by \$1 for every \$2 earned or otherwise received as cash income (1983: 3).

4. An UYAP would do away with aspects of the current allowances relating to youth which may act as disincentives to participate in education. It would be structured so as to try: i) to increase school retention (and overall education participation) and ii) to reduce the supply of youth to the full-time labour market.

Karmel wrote some time ago that

A rationalised education and training allowances scheme would not discourage students from staying in full-time education or training whether at secondary school, T.A.F.E. institution, C.A.E. or University. It would encourage young people to gain work experience by part-time employment and permit a combination of part-time training and part-time employment. Unemployment benefits would be available only as a last resort (1980: 56).

More recently, Wilenski, as previously mentioned, has noted the possible disincentive to continue at school provided by current allowances. Wilenski (1983: 15-16) also outlined 'The major principles and assumptions ... that might guide the review and development of financial support structures in the long term ...' (1983: 15), the first being 'that young people have the right to and should be encouraged to remain in full-time education up to the age of 18' (1983: 15). In discussing his General Model youth allowance,

- * It is taken for granted in this paper that neither the UYAP nor the subsequently discussed constrained youth allowances package (CYAP) would pay an allowance to youth who are in full-time employment.

Wilenski illustrates the possible link between youth allowances and the supply of youth to the full-time labour market. He writes of his General Model that

The level of benefit would have to be attractive enough so that those who might otherwise move automatically out of school and into career jobs will be tempted to remain out of the normal labour market for a period (1983: 17).

Also recently, Ironmonger has written that

Social security for Australian teenagers consists of an arbitrary collection of limits, barriers and jumps. Under it, staying on at school or going on to college or university instead of taking a job or going on the dole imposes a severe income penalty, leaving only those teenagers with strong family support free to continue with full-time education ...

Is there a solution? Yes: the payment of a universal youth allowance to all teenagers from 13 to 19 inclusive to replace the present dogs' breakfast of income allowances for this age group (1983: 3).

Ironmonger (1983: 3-4) predicts that a universal youth allowance would increase the education participation and decrease the labour force participation of youth, both apparently desirable outcomes in his view (see Ironmonger, 1983).

The previously quoted comments about Government interest in making student allowances and the dole more financially comparable suggest Federal Government concern with the apparent disincentive to stay in school provided by current allowances. Such Federal Government concern is also suggested by the following comments from Senator Grimes:

The very real problem of income support contributed greatly to the numbers of early school leavers.

Forty-five dollars a week [presumably a reference to the dole], particularly in a family where the parents are unemployed, is a damned sight better than the current secondary allowance (The Weekend Australian, 17-18 September 1983: 1).

5. An UYAP would do away with the unemployment benefit as it is currently known.

Senator Button's comments concerning an 'across-the-board' scheme to replace 'the proliferation of youth allowances and unemployment benefits and so on' is supportive of this point. One of Wilenski's guiding principles/assumptions for revamping youth support also supports this point, namely

... that the stigmatising effect of being unemployed should be removed and that youth feel free to explore various possible career paths (1983: 15).

Likewise, this point is supported by Shears and Matthews' recommendation to

Establish a national investigation into the benefits, costs and implications of replacing unemployment relief payments and the bewildering variety of allowances at present available with a basic Youth Grant plus a means-tested Youth Allowance paid directly to all 15, 16, 17 and 18 year old persons (1983: 109).

A Constrained Youth Allowances Package (CYAP)

While the Federal Government has direct control over youth allowances, its freedom to introduce changes in this area would seem to be curtailed by two major constraints, namely cost and political acceptability.

Wilenski (1983) seems aware of the cost constraint when he discusses his costly and liberal General Model youth allowance. He costs his General Model at \$2.8 billion, as opposed to roughly \$850 million currently spent on youth support (Wilenski, 1983: 18). Wilenski then notes that

There are many advantages in this proposal [the General Model] but its major disadvantage is clearly its cost (1983: 18)

and that

In the short term it would be realistic to acknowledge that it is likely to be seen as too expensive and an unnecessarily diffuse approach towards attaining the desired policy objective (1983: 19).

Wilenski also seems aware of the constraint of political acceptability, for he notes that his General Model '... might also offend too deeply the work ethic' (1983: 19).

On the other hand, Ironmonger (1983) seems relatively unconcerned about either the cost or the political acceptability of his universal youth allowance. He costs it at \$1,400m. total or \$780m. nett, based on 1981 figures (Ironmonger, 1983: 4). It is of interest though, that Ironmonger apparently felt some need to justify his costly universal youth allowance, for after discussing its cost he writes that '... long-term benefits would flow from increased educational participation and reduced levels of unemployment (1983: 4).

While on the cost constraint issue, it might be worth emphasising the magnitude of the costs which could be involved in changes to youth allowances. If, for example, the allowance under the secondary allowances scheme (SAS) were increased to the level of the dole, what would be the cost involved? In June 1983, 44,430 15-24 year olds were assisted under the SAS at an estimated cost for the 1982-83 financial year of \$29 million (Edwards and Dunlop, 1983: 10). To give 44,430 students an allowance the equivalent of the unemployment benefit for 16-17 year olds would cost more than \$100 million per annum if the allowance were paid for the full year!

Discussion of the political acceptability constraint on Federal Government initiatives in the youth allowances area must be particularly speculative because of the difficulty in determining what policy-makers and politicians will deem politically acceptable or unacceptable. It is suggested here that it will be deemed politically unacceptable for a Labor

Government to curtail or appear to curtail support for unemployed youth. Hence, support for unemployed youth at about the current rate and in the current form (the unemployment benefit) will probably continue. It is also suggested that it will be deemed politically unacceptable to have virtually no limitations set on what is permissible activity for youth allowance recipients. Because of this, as well as because of the cost constraint, some limitations will probably be set. It is further suggested that it will be deemed politically unacceptable to pay a substantial allowance to youth who are still at secondary school. Because of this, as well as because of the cost constraint, the allowance for youth still at school will probably be fairly low (considerably lower than the unemployment benefit) and will probably be restricted to 'needy' students.

In short, despite direct Federal Government control over youth-related allowances, cost and political acceptability presumably constrain the Federal Government in the changes it might seek in this area. It is suggested here that a youth allowances package will be introduced by the Federal Government in the not too distant future. However, it will be a constrained youth allowances package (CYAP), that is, a package constrained along the lines suggested in the preceding paragraph. Such a CYAP would apply to youth in a fairly broad age range, would provide financial support through a limited number of allowances, would permit allowance recipients to engage in a fairly broad (but not limitless) range of activities and would be structured so as to try to increase school retention (and overall education participation) and reduce the supply of youth to the full-time labour market. However, support for unemployed youth at about the current rate and in the current form would continue (the unemployment benefit possibly becoming one of the several 'allowances' in the 'package'), and the allowance for youth still at school would be kept fairly low (considerably lower than the unemployment benefit) and would be restricted to 'needy' students.

CRITICAL DISCUSSION

Two questions dominate this critical discussion. The first is: Are the changes being sought, or likely to be sought, achievable? The second is: Are those changes likely to increase school retention substantially? In considering these questions, school and attitudinal changes will be discussed first, and then youth allowances restructuring.

Are the Sought School and Attitudinal Changes Achievable?

Two broad points should be made about the achievability of the changes sought in this area. Both points throw doubt on the achievability of these changes, especially in the short term.

The first point is the lack of direct Federal Government control over the areas in which change is sought. As direct responsibility for secondary schooling lies with the State Governments, changes in school organisation, the curriculum, credentialling and assessment and school/community relations will have to be implemented through the States. Similarly, as the States control most teacher selection, on-going teacher employment and in-service teacher training, and as tertiary institutions control the selection of students for pre-service teacher education and the

content of teacher training courses, the Federal Government has little direct control over the means by which teacher attitudes and skills might be changed. It may be partly because of this lack of direct Federal control that the only mechanism for bringing about changes mentioned in the 'Schools' section of the PEP guidelines is the provision of funds (see Department of Education and Youth Affairs, 1983a: 15). The guidelines refer to funds being made available '... to the States and non-government schools to stimulate broadly based changes in secondary education ...' (Department of Education and Youth Affairs, 1983a: 15).

It should be remembered that the Comprehensive Policy for Transition from School to Work of the Fraser Federal Government encountered difficulty in State co-operation (see Department of Education and Youth Affairs, 1983b: 22). While Federal-State co-operation may now be easier to obtain, the lack of direct Federal Government control over areas in which change is sought still indicates that achieving school and attitudinal changes may be problematic.

The problem of lack of direct control is very evident in considering the sought change mentioned in the PEP guidelines of 'improving ... community attitudes to education' (Department of Education and Youth Affairs, 1983a: 15). The most direct means available to the Federal Government to try to bring about this change is probably a mass media campaign extolling the virtues of education!

While on the point of the lack of direct Federal Government control, views expressed in the Commonwealth Tertiary Education Commission's report Learning and Earning, are perhaps worth noting, although the question of the potential impact of sought changes on school retention is thereby alluded to prematurely. Learning and Earning notes that

It would be unrealistic to expect other than gradual changes in participation in any form of post-compulsory education. The broad conclusion to which this study leads is that, in part, changes in participation of young people in education will be influenced by a complex of factors, some which are not capable of direct government influence: they relate to the perceptions of parents and their children which lead to decisions to remain at or leave school or to enrol in tertiary education (1982: Vol. 1, 64-65).

Learning and Earning goes on to add

However, there are ways in which government action can influence the climate in which the decisions are taken and assist in removing financial barriers which are placed in the way of some groups of potential students. There are also ways in which institutions in all sectors of education can seek to improve the relevance of their courses to the needs of young people (1982: Vol. 1, 64-65).

The second point about the achievability of the sought school and attitudinal changes is the inherent difficulty in bringing about changes of the type sought. To aid discussion of this point, four of the sought

changes are presented. They are:

- . catering at all stages more adequately for the needs of the full range of students
 - . making changes to secondary school organisation to accommodate more adequately the social, economic and cultural diversity of students, and to promote self-confidence, independence and a sense of autonomy in all students
 - . changing and developing teacher attitudes
 - . improving the relationship between schools and the community, and community attitudes to education.
- (Department of Education and Youth Affairs, 1983a: 15).

One inherent difficulty involved in bringing about changes like the above is that entrenched attitudes and/or practices must be altered if the changes are to be achieved. A second inherent difficulty is that quite basic and possibly almost unalterable aspects of schooling will have to be altered if such changes are to come about.

Here it is appropriate to note comments by Hurn in his book The Limits and Possibilities of Schooling (1978). In that book Hurn suggests that 'school social organization' is

... determined by the constraints of motivating and controlling the student population and by the legacy of institutional forms that schools have inherited from the past. If students are graded and evaluated in particular ways, and if their behaviour is circumscribed by a series of rules that encourage passive compliance rather than active engagement, this is not merely because such practices are functional for elite groups in the wider society. Grades and detailed control over student behaviour, rather, can also be seen as adaptations to the problems of co-ordinating the activities of an essentially captive population. And once particular solutions to these problems are adopted, educators have vested interests in preserving traditional solutions rather than in adopting alternative ways of motivating and controlling student behaviour (1978: 262).

Hurn also writes that

I have also stressed the limits in the degree to which schools can satisfy the growth and development objectives of many contemporary educators - limits that reside as much in the internal problems of controlling, evaluating, and motivating the activities of students in a confined space as in the external problems of obtaining public support for innovative schooling. Educational rhetoric stressing individualization, "active student roles", and teachers as "resource persons" or "facilitators" tends to divert attention from the constraints under which all schools must labor (1978: 266).

It should be noted that Hurn goes on to write '... I believe it is far too soon to conclude that significant reform of compulsory schooling is impossible' (1978: 272). However, the relevant point for the purpose of the present discussion is that significant reform of schooling is difficult to achieve, yet it is significant reform of schooling which is being sought through PEP.

Certain other recent sociological accounts of education also suggest that school changes may not be easy to achieve. Apple (1978: 496), in criticising correspondence theories which stress the correspondence between aspects of schooling and the needs of the capitalist economic system, reminds his readers of '... the relative or partial autonomy of the institution [the school]'. Swartz, writing of Bourdieu, comments that

... Bourdieu points out that the educational system obtains a certain autonomy from outside structures through its self-reproductive capacity and its vested interest in protecting the value of scholastic cultural capital (1977: 551).

The discussion in this section suggests that school and attitudinal changes being sought through PEP are unlikely to be achieved to any great extent, especially in the short term.

Would the Sought School and Attitudinal Changes Increase School Retention Substantially?

The suggestion here is that even if the sought school and attitudinal changes could be achieved, it is unlikely that they would increase school retention substantially. One exception is noted first and then discounted from further consideration. That exception concerns community attitudes to education. If attitudes towards education could be changed so that immense value were placed on education for its own sake, then a substantial increase in school retention might result. However, Blakers writes

What the trends and research in school and further education participation demonstrate is that the commitment [of the Australian community] has been less to education as such, than to education as a means to work - and through work to income, status and personal identity (1983: 23).

There seems little reason to expect that the community will change from valuing education mainly for its extrinsic returns, to valuing it mainly for its intrinsic returns.

But aside from an unlikely change in community attitudes towards the valuing of education mainly for its intrinsic returns, would the other school and attitudinal changes sought by PEP be likely to increase school retention substantially if achieved? Such changes would presumably result in students viewing schooling more positively and as more relevant to their needs. As recent surveys of Australian school leavers (Delin et al., 1979; King, 1983a) point to disgruntlement with school as a factor influencing school leaving, it might be thought that an improved disposition towards

schooling on the part of youth would lead to increased school retention.

However, disgruntlement with school is not the only factor which influences the decision to leave school. The desire to have a job is another influential factor. Delin *et al.*, reporting on a survey of South Australian school leavers, write that

By far the main reasons given [by pre-Year 12 leavers for leaving school] were job oriented and related directly to employment. Across the board the factors which were most frequently of importance were "I had a job to go to" and "I wanted to earn my own money".

A second group of reasons - not being happy at school, being tired of school work and study, having enough education for the job wanted - appeared slightly important. However, this second group rated well below the concrete considerations mentioned earlier (1979: 17).

Similarly, Stoessiger, reporting on a survey of rural school leavers in Western Australia, Queensland and Tasmania, writes that

In all States the "pro-work" reasons for leaving are ahead of the "leave-school" reasons which in turn are well ahead of all other categories. The desire to get a job is a powerful impetus for leaving school (1980: 21).

Stoessiger subsequently writes that

In summary, getting a job and earning money was the major reason given by rural students for leaving school. A dislike of school and not feeling good enough were also important reasons, more so in Queensland but less important in Tasmania. Financial difficulties were of some importance in Tasmania and were important to a number of Queensland students (1980: 21).

Pro-job (e.g. 'I had the promise of a good job', 'I wanted to have some money of my own') as well as anti-school (e.g. 'I was just fed-up with school') reasons were found to be influential in the school leaving of Year 10 and Year 11 school leavers in the A.C.T. (King, 1983a: 34-35).

As pro-job reasons as well as anti-school reasons apparently influence school leaving, elimination of the anti-school reasons may not necessarily lead to a substantial increase in school retention. This would be especially so if the influence on the decision to leave school of pro-job reasons is increasing, which may be the case. Blakers (1983: 27) writes that 'Among the reasons students give for leaving school early, the getting of a job is clearly assuming greater importance in recent years'. Learning and Earning reports that

A major conclusion of the Study is that, very probably *because* of the deterioration in the labour market for young people during the 1970s, there has been an important shift in the relative attractiveness of full-time study and full-time employment, in favour of the latter (1982: Vol. 1, 21).

Learning and Earning also comments that

Two factors, however, are likely to have acted [against participation in education] ...:

- (c) the perception (supported by evidence) of a decline in the real financial returns to education, particularly for the 'marginal' graduate of a higher education institution;
- (d) the effect of tight labour market conditions in raising the appeal of 'full-time worker' status relative to that of 'full-time student'. Particularly to many of those with the ability to proceed to higher education, the very shortage of full-time jobs may have acted as an incentive rather than a deterrent to entering the labour market (1982: Vol. 1, 51).

Likewise, Ironmonger writes that

Evidence suggests that fear induced by the dwindling number of jobs is driving many teenagers who might have carried on their education to leave school early to grab the first job available (1983: 3).

While youth are pre-occupied with having a job (especially a full-time one) and while they evaluate education in terms of its extrinsic returns at a time when those returns have been reduced, provision of more enjoyable and more relevant schooling will not necessarily lead to a substantial increase in school retention.

Is a Constrained Youth Allowances Package Achievable?

An important point already noted which has relevance for the achievability of youth allowance changes is that the Federal Government has direct control over youth allowances. Theoretically then, the Federal Government can introduce whatever changes to youth allowances (e.g. rates, conditions) that it thinks fit. In practice, however, cost and political acceptability presumably constrain changes in this area. It has been suggested already in this paper that the Federal Government will, in the not too distant future, introduce a Constrained Youth Allowances Package (CYAP) which takes into account cost and political acceptability constraints. A CYAP should be achievable.

Would a Constrained Youth Allowances Package Increase School Retention Substantially?

Would a CYAP, as described earlier, increase school retention substantially? This question can be addressed by considering five hypothetical types of youth, namely the Committed School Student, the Unwilling School Student, the Job-Oriented School Leaver, the Dole-Oriented

School Leaver and the Financially-Forced School Leaver.*

The Committed School Student is either personally firmly committed to staying at school or is firmly committed to doing so by his or her parents. Such young people are probably fairly numerous and the CYAP would make little difference to their staying/leaving school. Even when such youth come from needy families, the allowance for staying at school provided through the CYAP may not be crucial to their staying at school. The latter claim is supported by a recent study of the SAS by Meade (1982) which, as the following quotes show, indicates that the SAS is often not crucial to continuance at school:

Parents in receipt of SAS were grateful for the help but it was clear that most would have been prepared to make personal sacrifices to keep their children at school by going without themselves, by asking help from relatives, by working longer hours or by borrowing money if the allowance had not been available (1982: 38).

... although shortage of money was a major problem for the families receiving SAS most of them did not see it as an insurmountable barrier to providing education for their children, as they were prepared to make education their first priority (1982: 38).

The Unwilling School Student is only staying at school because he or she cannot get a job. Such young people are also probably fairly numerous. Blakers (1983: 27) notes an estimate by Stricker and Sheehan that

'... about 35,000 persons aged 15 and 16 years were attending school in 1979 only because jobs were not available, and these amounted to 10-12 per cent of school enrolments in these age groups' (Stricker and Sheehan, 1981: 196-97), quoted in Blakers, 1983: 27).

However, Blakers (1983: 27) also refers to an estimate '... of about 14,000 students at school because of unemployment ...' which she attributes to Merrilees (1981). In a following of South Australian school students initially surveyed in October 1980, O'Neil, Bosio and Harrison (1982: 25) found that 'Some 32 per cent of those at school in May [1981], indicated they would leave school if first able to secure employment ...'.

The CYAP would probably make little difference to the school staying/leaving of Unwilling School Students. Such young people would prefer to leave school and be in a job, and job availability is the key determinant of their school staying/leaving. The only way the CYAP might influence their school staying/leaving is if it were to create job vacancies. In the unlikely event that the CYAP were to either entice a substantial number of young job holders to give up their jobs in order to return to education or

* Note that Hayden (1983: 100) writes of 'committed stayers', 'committed leavers' and 'swinging voters' in the context of tertiary education participation and later refers to those categories in the context of higher education participation (1983: 158).

stop a substantial number of potential Job-Oriented School Leavers from leaving school, Unwilling School Students would leave school in droves to take up the vacancies so created.

The Job-Oriented School Leaver is considerably influenced in his or her decision to leave school by the desire for a job. Such youth leave school either to take up a job offer or with the intention of getting a job, and they are probably fairly numerous. It would seem unlikely that the CYAP would stop potential Job-Oriented School Leavers from leaving school. A full-time job would pay more than any allowance they might get through the CYAP, as well as providing other 'returns' such as adult status. The CYAP might, however, make returning to school a more attractive proposition for Job-Oriented Leavers who fail to obtain employment.

The Dole-Oriented School Leaver is considerably influenced in his or her decision to leave school by the desire to receive the unemployment benefit. Contrary to the impression that might be gained from material presented earlier in this paper, it is likely that Dole-Oriented School Leavers are relatively rare.

Several points may be made in support of the claim that there are relatively few Dole-Oriented School Leavers. Firstly, in a recent survey of South Australian school students, only 2 out of 61 Year 10 and 248 Year 11 students who were intending to leave school reported 'Want to go on Unemployment Benefits' as their main reason for leaving school that year (O'Neil and Bosio, 1982: 57). O'Neil and Bosio (1982: 71) write that 'This study provides results which are not consistent with the view that young people leave school because of the desire to accept unemployment benefits'. Secondly, as already indicated, Unwilling School Students are probably fairly numerous. This suggests that even youth who would prefer to be working than at school, often stay on at school rather than leave and go on the dole. Thirdly, some studies suggest an apparent unwillingness on the part of young people to go on the dole. In a study of Brisbane school leavers, Bright and Wilkes (1980: 23) found that only the minority of students interviewed were sympathetic to the unemployed and that most '... rejected the idea outright' that '... they would accept the unemployment benefit if they could not find work ...'.

In a study of school leavers in a rural town in New South Wales, King (1983: 50) found that when asked about whether they would go on the dole if they became unemployed, about one-third of her sample indicated that they would not while one-fifth indicated that they did not know. However, O'Neil and Bosio (1982: 66) found in their survey of school students that 'If after leaving school and being unable to find work, 74 per cent of respondents indicated they would apply for unemployment benefits'. Fourthly, some unemployed youth do not go on the dole. Williams (1979: 621) points out that in July 1978 about one-fifth of unemployed persons under 25 were not registered with the CES, thereby disqualifying themselves from receiving the dole. Musgrave and Wind (1978: 174) found that many unemployed youth in a rural Victorian area they studied did not claim the dole. The relevant percentages were 19 per cent and 46.3 per cent for town boys and girls respectively, 33.3 per cent and 41.7 per cent for housing commission estate boys and girls respectively and 30 per cent and 61.9 per cent for Shire boys and girls respectively (Musgrave and Wind, 1978: 174). Fifthly, youth are often not knowledgeable about what the dole pays. King (1983b: 49) found that only about half of her sample gave a reasonably accurate report of the

amount they would receive on the dole. O'Neil and Bosio (1982: 71) found that 'Only 39 per cent of students knew the correct level of unemployment benefit paid to a single person under 18 years of age'. O'Neil and Bosio comment that

The argument that school leaving is responsive to shifts in the benefit level assumes that young people have information about the level of benefit and, possibly the benefit/earnings ratio. This study provides evidence to challenge and refute that assumption (1982: 71).

While there may be some Dole-Oriented School Leavers, the number is probably not large. The CYAP would be unlikely to stop potential Dole-Oriented School Leavers from leaving school, for under the CYAP leaving school and receiving the unemployment benefit would still be more lucrative than staying on at school and possibly receiving some financial support.

The Financially-Forced School Leaver leaves school either to take a job or to go on the dole, primarily because he or she has little other alternative owing to financial pressures. The comment quoted earlier to the effect that economic circumstances are forcing some students to leave school to go on the unemployment benefit would apply to such youth. Despite that quoted comment and despite acknowledging a relationship between family income and school participation (see the overviews by Blakers, 1983: 28-30 and Edwards and Dunlop, 1983, Appendix D: 1-2), it is queried here whether many youth fall in the category of Financially-Forced School Leaver.

Recent studies which have explored the decision to leave school suggest that financial pressure is relatively unimportant as a reason for leaving school. Delin et al.'s study of South Australian school leavers was quoted earlier in this paper. In that study, only 1 per cent of pre-Year 12 school leavers reported that 'My family could not afford to support me' was the most important reason in their decision to leave school, with only another 2 per cent reporting that it was a very important reason in their decision and another 4 per cent reporting that it was of some importance (see Delin et al., 1979: 50). Only 6 per cent of Year 10 and 3 per cent of Year 11 school leavers in a recent survey of A.C.T. school leavers reported that 'My family couldn't afford to let me stay on' was very important in their decision to leave school, while only 7 per cent and 6 per cent respectively reported that 'My parents wanted me to get a job' was very important (King, 1983a: 34). Stoessiger (1980: 20) found in a survey of rural school leavers in Western Australia, Queensland and Tasmania that 6.8 per cent, 18.3 per cent and 12.6 per cent respectively gave 'Parents couldn't afford it' as a reason for not going on with full-time education. While those percentages seem fairly high, for each State they place 'Parents couldn't afford it' as only the fifth most frequently reported reason out of seven (see Stoessiger, 1980: 20). The previously cited study of the SAS by Meade (1982) suggests that youth often stay on at school despite family financial difficulties. Meade notes that

One of the most striking features of the survey and interviews was the educational commitment of parents, who despite their limited finances, were prepared to make personal sacrifices in order to support and encourage their children at school. Despite their difficulties none of the families indicated that they would be prepared to forego their children's

educational opportunities in order to obtain the higher benefits payable to the children, for example, from unemployment relief (1982: 42).

Nonetheless, some youth may become Financially-Forced School Leavers. The CYAP would be unlikely to stop potential Financially-Forced School Leavers from leaving school, for leaving school and working or leaving school and going on the dole would still be more lucrative options than staying at school and receiving a small allowance to do so.

This brief discussion of five hypothetical types of youth does little to indicate that a CYAP can be expected to increase school retention substantially. Naturally, a CYAP may encourage some wavering students and students in particular situations to stay at school. However, it seems doubtful whether a substantial increase in school retention would result from a CYAP.

In closing this discussion of the question of whether a CYAP would increase school retention substantially, relevant comment from three separate sources is presented. The comments from the first two sources were probably aimed more at tertiary education participation, but may also have relevance for school retention.

The first source is the recent report Learning and Earning, which comments as follows:

Student assistance can also encourage education participation, but only to a limited extent. Its principal effect is to enable those students who are motivated to full-time study to achieve their objective; few student assistance schemes provide benefits which of themselves are likely to entice the uncommitted student into tertiary study, unless they provide employment guarantees as well as financial aid (1982: 58).

... a modest increase in allowances and a gradual relaxation of a means test can be expected to have only a marginal effect on the total number of students seeking entry to full-time courses (1982: Vol. 1, 59).

The second source is a paper by Beswick presented at the 'Learning and Earning' Conference in 1983:

The reasons for poor participation rates are at least as much questions of attitude, motives and social values as they are of financial costs and benefits (1983: 27).

The third source is Wilenski (1983). Wilenski discusses a Modified Approach as one of three youth allowance models. That approach, costed at \$1.5 billion, would involve payment of a low-level basic allowance to youth who are not employed full-time, with payment of an add-on means-tested allowance to youth undertaking designated activities such as full-time education or community services (Wilenski, 1983: 19-21). Of relevance here is Wilenski's comment that

The level of the basic allowance if the aim is to reduce overall cost would have to be kept low, so low that probably it would be of purely incidental value ("pocket money") in well-to-do families, and too low to discourage the disadvantaged from taking their chances in the labour market (1983: 21).

The preceding comments from Learning and Earning, Beswick (1983) and Wilenski (1983) do little to suggest that a CYAP would increase school retention substantially.

CONCLUDING COMMENTS

This paper has discussed i) school and attitudinal changes being sought through PEP and ii) youth allowances restructuring in the context of the school retention issue. It has been structured around two questions: 'Are the changes being sought, or likely to be sought, achievable?' and 'Are those changes likely to increase school retention substantially?'. With respect to school and attitudinal changes, it has been suggested that school and attitudinal changes being sought through PEP are unlikely to be achieved to any great extent, especially in the short term. Furthermore, the paper has queried whether such changes, even if achieved, would increase school retention substantially. With respect to youth allowances restructuring, the paper has suggested that a constrained youth allowances package (CYAP) is achievable and likely to be introduced in the not too distant future by the Federal Government. However, it has queried whether a CYAP would increase school retention substantially.

The discussion in the paper could well be criticised for being too narrow in focus and too negative in tone largely because it discusses school and attitudinal changes and youth allowances restructuring in terms of their achievability and likely influence on school retention. Perhaps some brief comments will moderate such criticism.

It could be argued, for example, that regardless of the achievability of the school and attitudinal changes sought through PEP, it is desirable that such changes be stated as goals. It could also be argued that positive outcomes may result from attempting to bring about such changes, even if those changes are largely unachievable. The author would concur with both arguments. It could also be argued that while minor school and attitudinal changes that might be achieved through PEP may not increase school retention substantially, they may be desirable on other grounds. The author would also concur with that argument. Similarly, it could be argued that the introduction of a CYAP may be desirable, even if it is unlikely to result in a substantial increase in school retention. Again the author would concur.

Further to the paper's emphasis on school retention, it could be criticised for focusing on school retention rather than on education participation. However, this can be defended. Firstly, the focus on school retention, rather than on education participation, helped keep the exercise manageable. Secondly, the push towards full secondary education, defined by near 100 per cent retention to the end of secondary school, is arguably a

fundamental weapon in the battle to increase education participation. It is noteworthy here that the recent Commonwealth Schools Commission publication Participation and Equity in Australian Schools (1983) is sub-titled The Goal of Full Secondary Education. A comment by Beswick is also noteworthy here:

When seen in an international perspective, the most important contribution to participation rates in higher education is the retention rate to the level of qualifying for entry (1983: 4).

Finally, the paper could be criticised because it does not discuss the possible influence on school retention of minor school and attitudinal changes which might be achieved and the contemporaneous introduction of a CYAP. It is possible that such changes might, in combination, increase school retention. However, the author suggests that the desire to be out working, as well as the valuing of education mainly for its extrinsic returns, will continue to curtail retention rates in Australian schools.

That the desire to be out working and the valuing of education mainly for its extrinsic returns are important factors influencing school retention in Australia should perhaps be directly claimed here. These two factors are fairly inter-related. If working is a dominant concern, it is easy to see why education is valued mainly for its extrinsic returns. If education is valued mainly for its extrinsic returns, being out working has importance as a requisite condition for the realisation of such returns. The desire to have a job seems an influential factor in school leaving in Australia, as studies cited earlier in this paper indicate. The implementation of policy initiatives such as PEP or a CYAP would seem unlikely to change this situation.

Before closing, two final points about school retention deserve mention. The first point is actually a question: Is increased school retention really desirable? The author has reservations about the desirability of increased school retention, especially if the needs of the 'new breed' of retainees are not really to be met by the school. Elsewhere, the author has written that

Some potential early leavers may benefit little from additional schooling which may only prolong the frustration they have experienced during their years of compulsory attendance (King, 1981: 11)

and that

Retaining students at school when they would prefer to leave may not always improve their employment chances and may sometimes have negative side effects. Unless the school is really able to adapt to the needs of such students, their additional years at school will probably be years of further frustration and failure (King, 1983a: 101).

The added responsibility of the school to meet student needs if school retention is increased has been given some official recognition, for the Department of Education and Youth Affairs writes that

... if significant numbers of present-day school leavers are to be retained in the school system, it must make genuine provision for their real needs and must offer them satisfying experiences (1983: xix-xx).

However, whether the school can meet this responsibility is a moot point.

It is also possible, as implied in a previous quote (King, 1983a: 101) that the 'new breed' of retainees will find that their additional schooling does not increase their employment prospects. Delin et al. note that 'Although the highest rate of unemployment is among Year 10 [South Australian] leavers there is also a disturbingly high unemployment rate among end of Year 12 leavers who do not matriculate' (1979: 7) and add that '... it certainly appears that leavers did not improve their employment chances by continuing beyond Year 11, unless they had pursued a full P.E.B. [Public Education Board] course' (1979: 9). O'Neil, Bosio and Harrison write that

Year 12, S.C.C. students [in South Australia] after leaving school, have higher rates of unemployment than most other school leavers ...

Are employment opportunities reduced due to the fact they are one year older? Staying at school longer may have in fact, contributed to their disadvantage in the labour market (1982: 32).

The author, writing about a survey of A.C.T. school leavers, noted that

The results concerning preparation at the time of leaving school and unemployment benefit reception after leaving school give some suggestion that if potential early leavers are encouraged or coerced into staying at school, and stay on to become Year 12 school leavers who do not receive a TES [Tertiary Education Score], their additional schooling may be of little benefit to them in terms of either preparation for a variety of tasks and situations or avoidance of unemployment (King, 1981: 11).

It seems possible then, that the 'new breed' of retainees, who may well take 'non-matriculation' courses, may find that their added schooling does little to increase their employment prospects.

The second point about school retention which deserves mention is that school retention seems to be undergoing a considerable upturn. The apparent retention rate figures indicate 36.3 per cent retention to the final year of secondary school for 1982, as opposed to 34.8 per cent for 1981 and 34.5 per cent for 1980 (Commonwealth Schools Commission, 1983: 8). However, the Commonwealth Schools Commission (1983: 6) notes that 'The most striking feature is the significant jump in the figures for retention to the second last year, for males in government schools in particular'. The overall apparent retention rate figures indicate 57.4 per cent retention to the second last year for 1982, as opposed to 55.2 per cent for 1981 and 54.0 per cent for 1980 (Commonwealth Schools Commission, 1983: 8). Furthermore,

preliminary estimates suggest that school enrolments of 15-17 year-olds increased considerably (by 11.4 per cent for males and by 2.9 per cent for females) from April 1982 to April 1983 (Department of Education and Youth Affairs, 1983b: 26).

Ironically then, school retention seems already on the upturn, despite the fact that PEP has not yet been implemented and a youth allowances restructuring has not yet been formulated. This upturn may well be due to the worsened state of the youth labour market. O'Neil, Bosio and Harrison write that

What is clear is that young people are staying on a [sic] school after the period of compulsory schooling and are not leaving until aged 16 years or more ... Certainly, the general state of the labour market is having the effect of retaining students in school (1982: 25).

The Commonwealth Schools Commission (1983: 7) writing of the 1982 increase in post-compulsory age participation rates, states that the increase '... is associated with the rapid deterioration in the youth labour market...'. Similarly, the Department of Education and Youth Affairs notes that

The sharply increased participation, especially among males, in 1983 represents a clear break in the trend, and is associated with the rapid deterioration in the youth labour market, which saw just on 80,000 full-time jobs held by teenagers disappear in 1982 and the number of new apprenticeships drop by about 30 per cent. Whether this increased participation is consolidated into a new trend will depend not only on developments in labour demand but also on the responsiveness of schools to the changing needs of young people (1983b: 26).

Perhaps it is to coping with the 'natural occurring' increase in school retention and to meeting the needs of the new retainees that our efforts should be directed most.

This paper has presented a particular case. While a counter-case could presumably be put, it is hoped that the paper has raised issues worthy of discussion.

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